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The Mexican Muralists

By ALMA M. REED

175 ILLUSTRATIONS 16 C[illegible] PLATES

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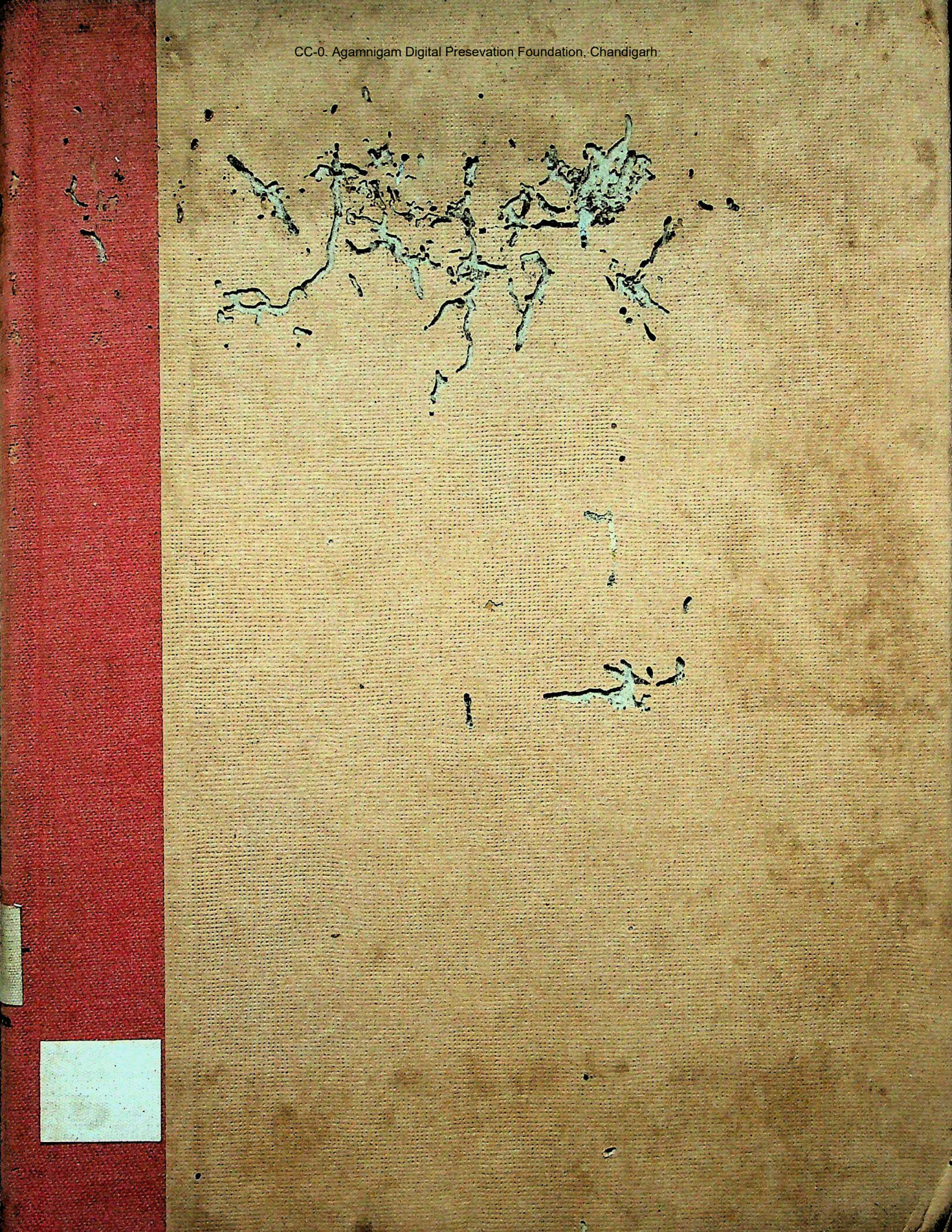

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THE MEXICAN MURALISTS

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JORGE GONZÁLEZ CAMARENA.
"History of Mexico," mural, Technological Institute of Monterrey.

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The Mexican Muralists

By Alma M. Reed

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When we asked the muralist José Clemente Orozco for his definition of art, with characteristic brevity, he replied: "Art is knowledge at the service of emotion."

On another occasion, in discussing art's essential elements, he said: "Behind every authentic work of art there is always an idea, *never a story."*

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THE MEXICAN MURALISTS

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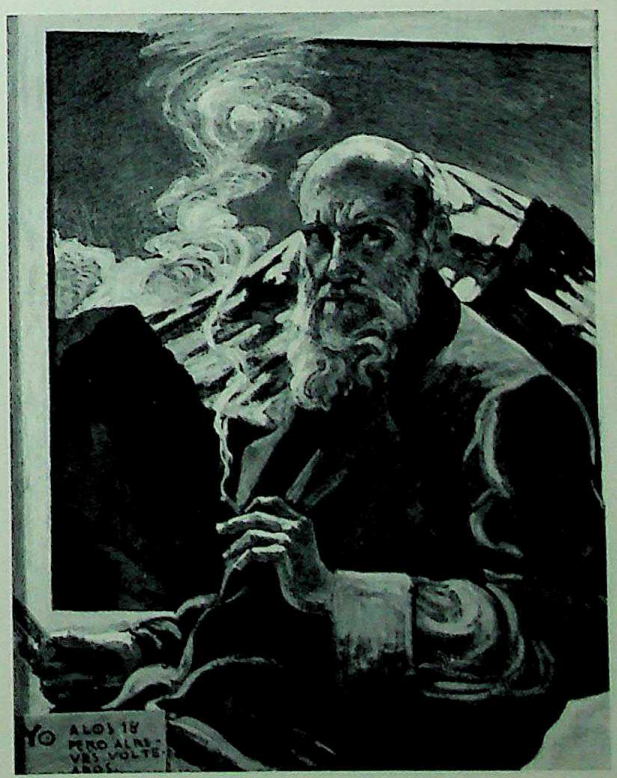
AUTHOR'S FOREWORD

The purpose of this book is to acquaint the general reader with the personalities, the aesthetic attitudes and the work of the leaders of the Mexican mural movement. It is not an encyclopedia, nor is it a history of the "Golden Age" or of the magnificent revival of mural art in Mexico. Rather, it is intended as a series of biographical sketches, in hope that a close-up view of the men of the movement will present a clear image, an understanding and an appreciation of the movement itself. At least it may serve as a layman's guideline through the color labyrinth. The movement's depth, breadth and quality need not be described—they are revealed in the illustrations of the artists' work.

The three "giants" of the Mexican "Renaissance"—José Clemente Orozco, Diego Rivera and David Alfaro Siqueiros—and the painters who assisted them with technical knowledge and often with ideologic suggestions, were bequeathed a solid framework for a modern national art structure, as Orozco himself states in his *Autobiography*. In the early 1920's they were the inheritors of concessions won as a result of a strike by the students of the San Carlos Academy a decade earlier. The young rebels, for whom Orozco served in 1910 as committee chairman, had vigorously protested the imposition of outworn methods and the traditions of the European Academy, and the concessions, granted by the Minister of Education, guaranteed greater freedom in the teaching of art. In motivation and in the forming of new patterns, the Golden Age pursued policies enunciated by the rebels. Between these policies and the Renaissance were other important influences—political, literary and archaeological—each contributing its individual building block to the total structure.

The possibility of collective mural projects in true fresco was doubtless first advanced by Dr. Atl of Guadalajara, who at the turn of the century was a teacher in the Academy and a leader in the ranks of the renovators. Born



MONTENEGRO. Portrait of Dr. Atl.

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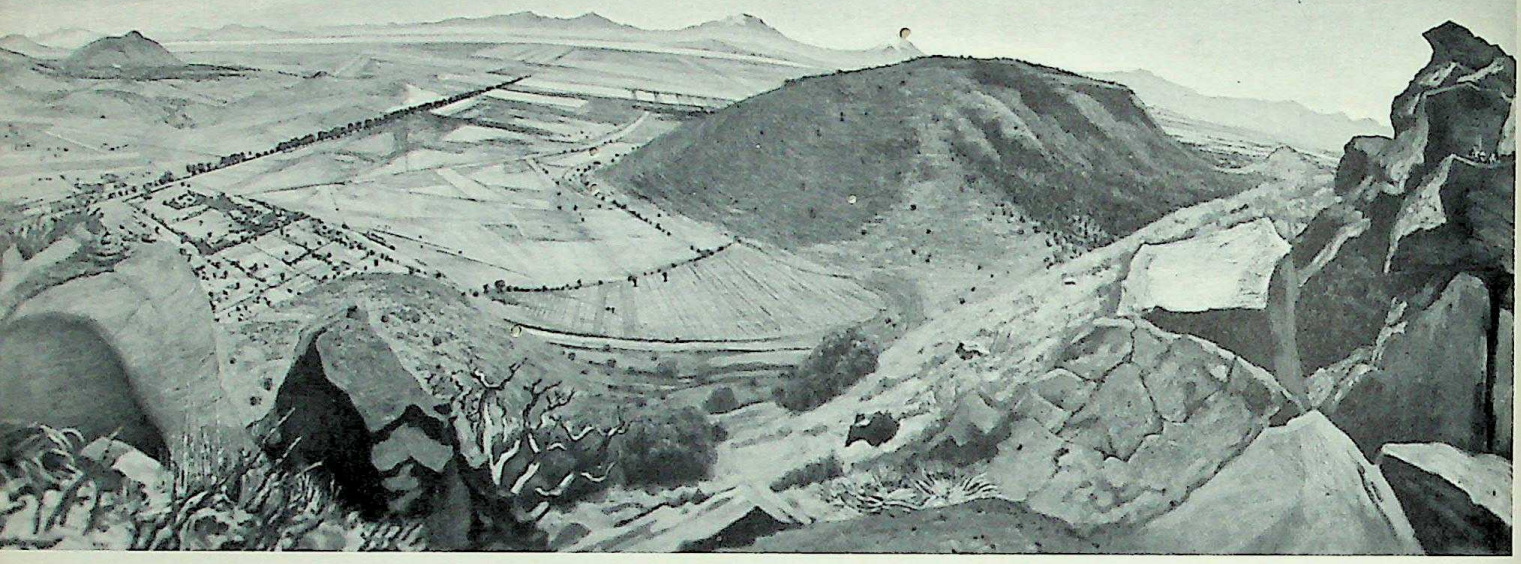

DR. ATL. "Luminous Morning," the Sonora mountains.

Gerardo Murillo, but changing his name to "Atl" (Aztec for water) as a gesture of *indigenismo,* the versatile savant—an authority on volcanoes, popular arts and Colonial architecture, a superb portraitist and landscape painter and the author of exciting tales of Mexican adventure—had only recently returned from extensive wanderings in Europe and the Far East. He presented to his pupils, among them Orozco and Rivera, the dazzling prospect of emulating the Italian masters whose Vatican murals he described to them in minute and ecstatic terms. In 1907 Dr. Atl arranged Rivera's first exhibition and soon thereafter he was sent on a scholarship to the celebrated Spanish painter Chicarro for European study.

In their respective accounts of their school days, both Orozco and Rivera give full credit to José Guadalupe Posada for igniting their youthful ambitions for an art career. As the story of Posada's potent influence is told in our biography, *Orozco* (Oxford University Press, 1956), the location of the primary school young Clemente Orozco attended was a vital factor in channeling his earliest urges in the direction of art.

"Calle Licenciado Verdad traverses the busy district immediately behind the Cathedral and the Zocalo, the vast central plaza where Mexico is said to have taken root with the finding there by the Aztecs, in some legendary past, of the eagle and the snake. But of far greater stimulus to the eager imagination of the embryo muralist was the fact that his school was only a few doors from the printing shop of Vanegas Arroyo. There, behind a window that faced on the street, José Guadalupe Posada, the most famous of the Mexican engravers, worked at his craft in full view of the public.

"Maestro Posada illustrated the popular Vanegas Arroyo editions, which ranged from prayers and children's story books to the extraordinary *corridos*. The latter, corresponding roughly to present-day tabloid scandal sheets, appeared in the form of handbills printed on cheap and sometimes vividly colored paper—coral pink, emerald, canary yellow. Usually, the *corrido* gave a detailed account of a single sensational event, preferably a ghastly murder. Death itself frequently took part in the action, pictured as a merry fellow dancing a fandango or striking some droll pose to balance the trag-

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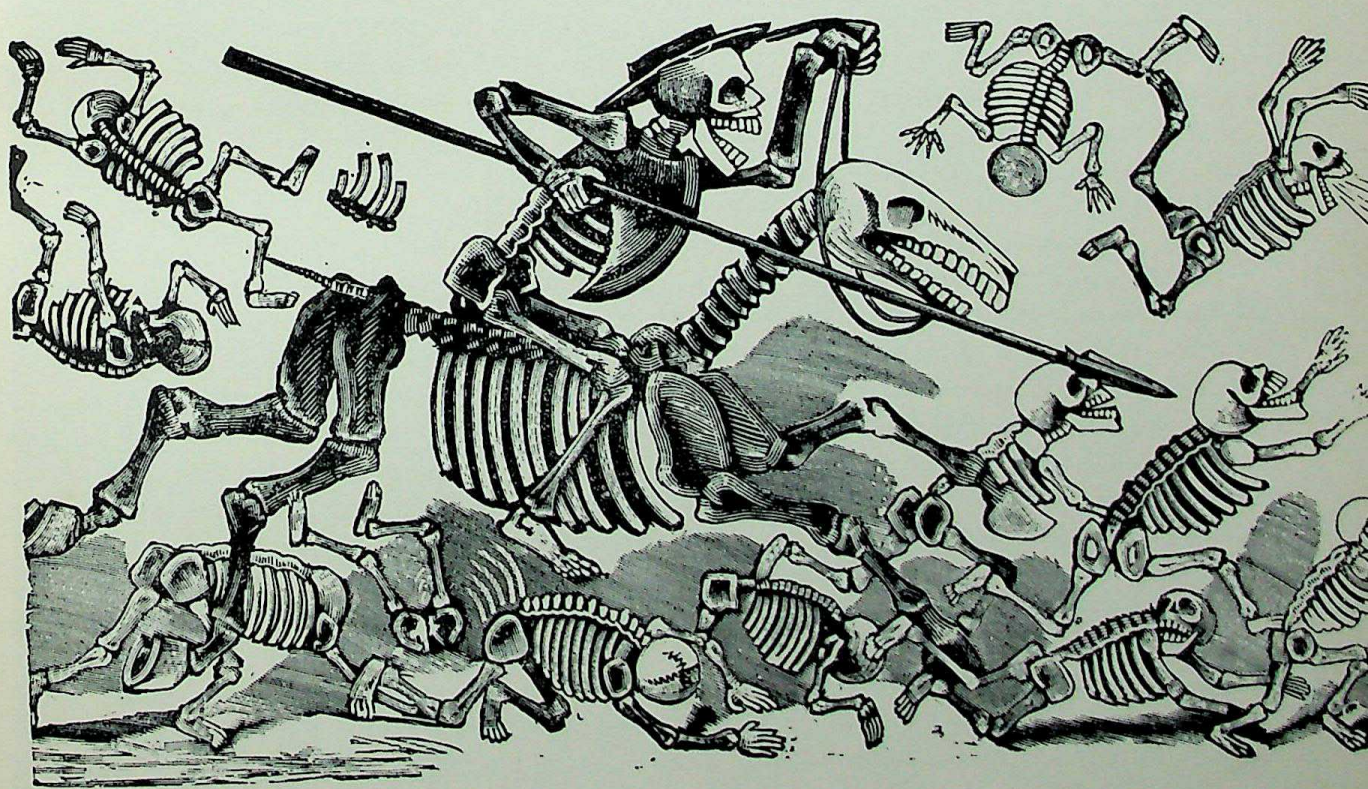
edy with an element of grim mirth. Whatever the crime, Posada's powerful engraving, which headed the sheet enclosed in an ornate border, could be depended upon to synthesize the lurid particulars with maximum dramatic effect.

"Another type of *corrido* publicized the brave deeds of the popular heroes of the day and often carried rhymed text. Many of these won permanent place as ballads in Mexican folklore. Posada's engravings of Madero, Zapata and other Revolutionary leaders established him as a pioneer in Mexico's socially conscious art. As Diego Rivera points out in his preface to Posada's collected engravings, 'he was a daring skirmisher with broadsides' and a contributor to periodicals that opposed the Díaz regime. Posada made more than fifteen thousand engravings and created a style in which the Mediterranean attitude and Mexican subject matter are combined with startling, dynamic incisiveness."

Another great stimulus for the incipient muralists was the open-air art schools founded by Alfredo Ramos Martínez. The first, which included David Alfaro Siqueiros among its pupils, was inaugurated in 1913 at Santa Anita, a suburb of Mexico City. Several years later, the largest and most important of the twenty-seven training centers established in various parts of the Republic was opened at Coyoacán. Here many artists destined for fame, including Fernando Leal and Jean Charlot, began or continued their art studies. Here, too, they learned to look upon the Mexican landscape and the familiar scenes of Mexican life as worthy and even fascinating subject matter.

Martínez himself, born in Monterrey in 1872, had only shortly before arrived at an appreciation of his national heritage following years in Europe, where he was a frequent exhibitor and had received numerous honors.



POSADA. "Don Quixote," engraving.

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An historic photograph of teachers in the open-air art schools. *Left to right:* Cano, Leal, de León, de Cordoba, Enciso, unidentified, Cabrera, Clausell, Bringas, Ledesma.

Most of his murals, however, were painted in the United States during a fourteen-year residence in Southern California. In 1937 and 1938 he decorated a chapel in La Jolla and later designed a stained-glass window for St. John's Catholic Church in Los Angeles. While in Mexico, between 1942 and 1944, he painted his first Mexican murals, commissioned by the Ministry of Education, at the Normal School for Young Women. He died in 1946 after almost completing a series of fresco panels in the Margaret Fowler Memorial Garden of Scripps College, Claremont, California.

Influences, direct and indirect, that have given texture, color, design and content to the creation that is now recognized as unique in twentieth-century aesthetics may, of course, be traced ad infinitum. Mexican muralism has never evaded an issue nor shirked a responsibility. Unflinchingly, it has occupied itself with almost every response of the human consciousness and grappled with virtually every problem of the social, political, intellectual and religious life of the Mexican people. And some of the more significant contributions, past and present, have originated in ideas inspired not only by the easel painters and print-makers but often by the poets, the song writers, the caricaturists and the archaeologists.

About the time of the students' strike, a beneficent influence that aroused the Mexican artist to a fresh perception of Mexican values appeared in the sensitive Impressionist paintings of Jorge Enciso of Guadalajara. He is credited—and his rich landscapes in the Jalisco State Museum support the claim—with having found a Mexican way of looking at the Mexican night. In any event, these *paisajes* enveloped in poetic nuance possess all the haunting lyricism of a tender Yucatecan love song. They have little in common with José María Velasco's classic Italian precision, which dominated Mexican landscape painting until that time. Jean Charlot has pointed out that Enciso, who abandoned an art career of brilliant promise to become the crusading protector of the Colonial buildings threatened by real estate interests and, in recent years, subdirector of the National Institute of Anthropology and History, "discovered the blue Mexican night and was the first to discern the treasure of color harmonies dormant in the dusky villages or in the twilight fields."

Of tremendous impact both ideologically and technically upon Mexican art, and especially upon contemporary muralism, was the exhaustive study made by Dr. Manuel F. Gamio, the late director of UNESCO Indian Affairs Institute, in his *La Población del Valle de Teotihuâcán,* published in 1922 by the Mexican government, with its hundreds of reproductions of the ancient monuments and of various aspects of the region's colonial and modern life. Dr. Gamio arranged for Francisco Goitia to illustrate the monumental four-volume work and, later, to make similar sketches and paintings for a publication on Oaxaca.

Born in Zacatecas in 1884, Goitia had been commissioned by Carranza to record, in drawings and in pictures, the military actions of the Revolution between 1910 and 1920. As a result of this experience he became so convinced

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of the need for social and economic reform that he determined to cast his own lot with the lowly and the helpless and devote his life to the achievement of Revolutionary ideals. He began by giving away all of his property and by renouncing the worldly environment he had known as a student in Spain and Italy and as a cultural attaché in Mexico to live as a hermit in Xochimilco. His famous canvas, "Tata Jesucristo," painted in 1926—a treasure of the permanent collection of the Mexico City Museum of Modern Art—has been described as one of the greatest achievements of expressionism in world painting. The recipient of a small government pension in exchange for his total output over the years, Goitia was awarded the Grand International Prize of 25,000 pesos from the Ministry of Education in 1959, while Dr. Atl received the *Premio de la Nación* of 15,000 pesos. The official citation declared that the lives of both painters represented "ceaseless production for *la patria*."

A few months later, in February, 1960, Goitia died, nationally mourned as one of the most beloved of the Golden Age masters. His contribution is recognized as having been made not only to Mexican art but to the cause of universal peace. Some artists have depicted war's brutality; others its heroic moments, the triumph of man in the mass over the tyrant and the despot. Goitia left a profoundly penetrating record of war's more intimate, personal tragedy. He has interpreted the unutterable sorrow of those who mourn the loss of the dearly

GOITIA. "Tata Jesucristo," oil.

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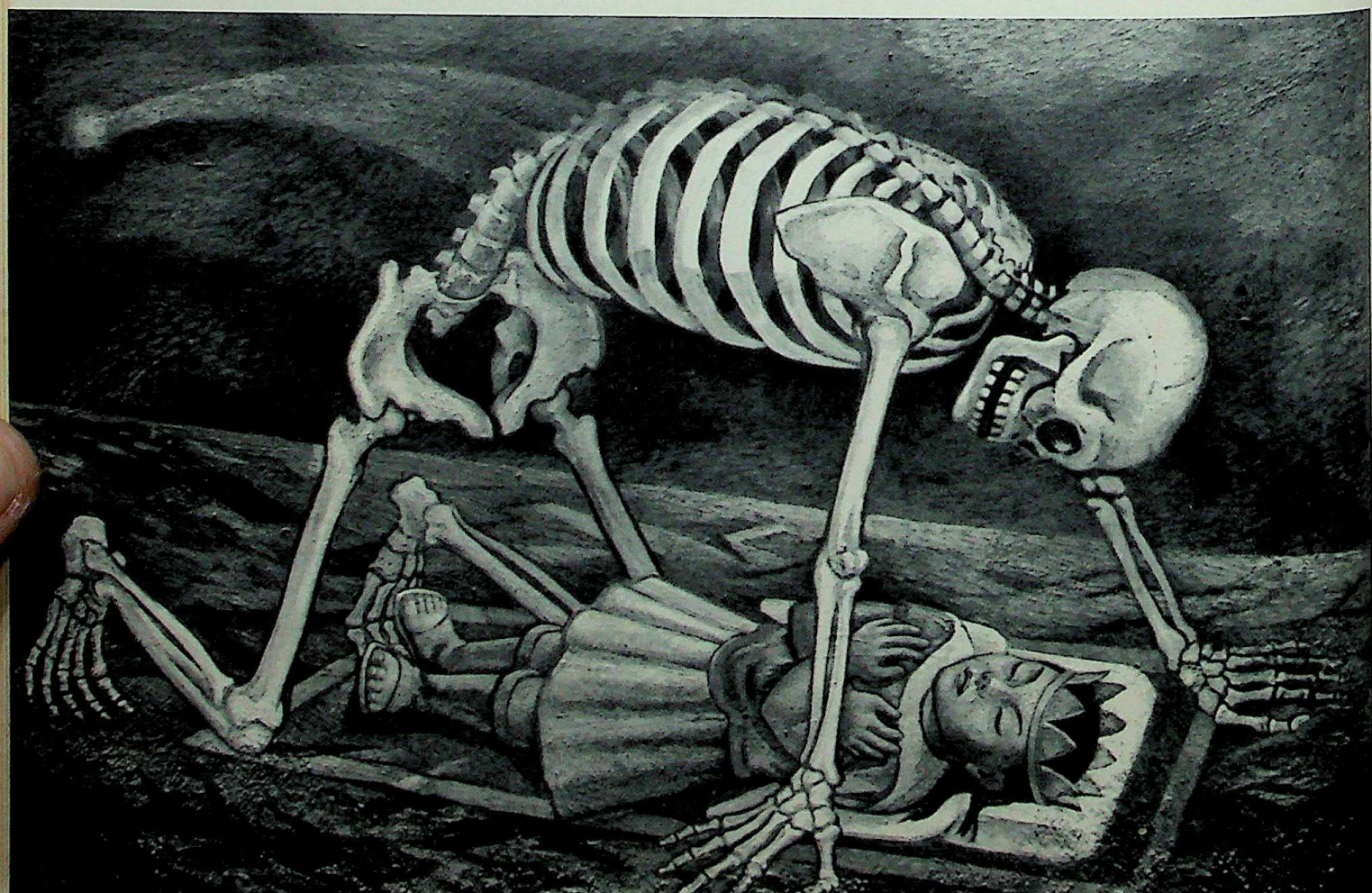
beloved, the victim of armed violence. Like most of Mexico's greatest men, Goitia was ahead of his time, but it can be said of him that he also lived, perhaps even more vitally, in an earlier age. For, in his selfless dedication to the needs of the exploited and the dispossessed, he could claim spiritual kinship with the good St. Francis, "little brother of the poor."

Goitia's work reaffirmed the sincerity of Mexico's Revolutionary art. No less than Orozco's famed series of ink drawings, "Mexico in Revolution," it presents plastic arguments for an end to the killing and maiming of youth —arguments against which the pleas of political or military expediency seem shallow and fatuous. He has indicted war with a power that transcends the spoken or written word. Above all, he has charged humanity with the moral obligation of renouncing bloodshed as a means of settling domestic or international disputes—and his own life indicates that there *is* another way.

The stimulus to the Mexican Renaissance provided by Gabriel Fernández Ledesma through his literary interpretation of the movement and his scholarly publicizing of the early muralists was invaluable. His services in this connection have been likened to those performed for the School of Paris by Apollinaire, that "ardent spirit in quest of beauty," whose enthusiasm, vision and sure aesthetic judgment brought to world attention the epoch-making Fauves at a time when they were being rejected and ridiculed. An outstanding decorator of the ecclesiastical buildings being reconditioned by the government as educational centers, Ledesma's broad cultural interests found a number of outlets that enriched Mexican literature as well as the fine and popular arts. Working with

LEDESMA. "Death and the Child" (pyroxylin).



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LEDESMA. Pyroxylin mural, ceiling breakfast room, Hotel del Prado, Mexico City.

skill and sensitivity, he revived the venerable craft of Talavera Tile when he framed Montenegro's tempera panels in the Chapel of S. S. Pedro y San Pablo.

Born in 1900 at Aguascalientes, of a socially prominent family noted for its writers, artists and men of science, Ledesma, like Apollinaire and his passion for all that glorified

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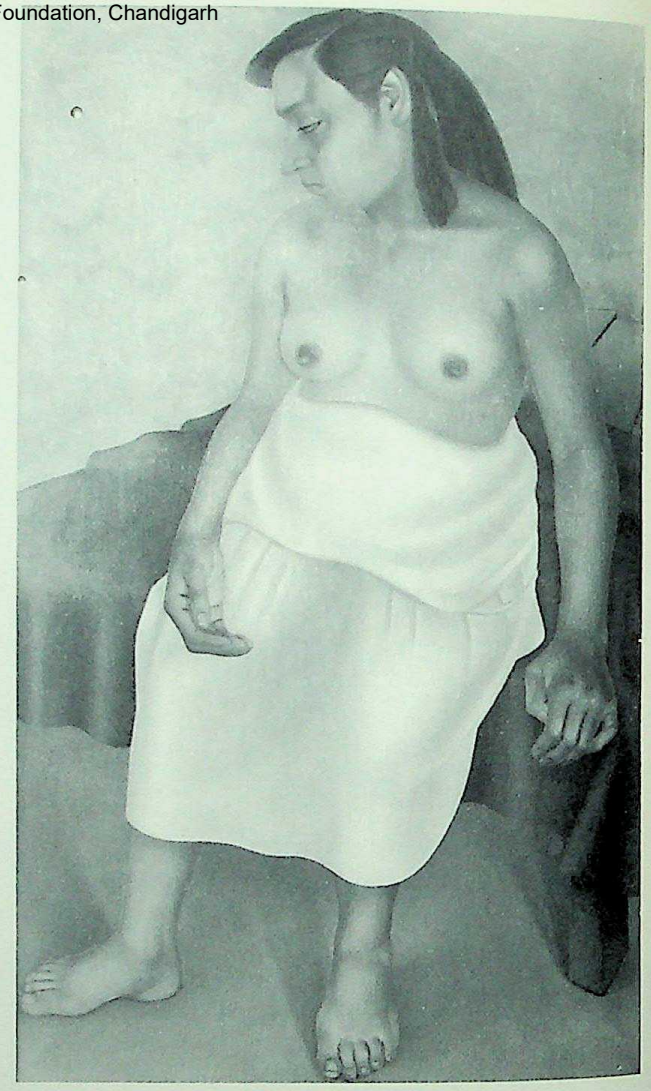
existence, logically combined his literary talent and his various artistic pursuits. As editor of the *revista Forma,* an elaborate government-sponsored organ, he was responsible for the first articles on Orozco, Lozano, Tamayo and other first-rank painters. The most profound interpretation of Orozco's significance was written by Jean Charlot, one of Ledesma's many brilliant collaborators, for *Forma,* as were articles on the ancient Maya by Dr. Sylvanus G. Morley and several on the popular arts by Dr. Atl.

An organizer of art events, Ledesma collaborated in 1921 with Montenegro in the decoration of the Mexican Pavilion for the Centennial Exposition in Rio de Janeiro, and he was co-director with Francisco Díaz de León of La Sala de Arte of the Ministry of Education. As a painter and a creative photographer, Ledesma has recorded popular art objects inspired by the theme of death, from all over the Republic. He has written many articles and a book, titled *La Vida de la Muerte,* on the subject. He is an avid student of Aztec herbal lore, and the animal, mineral and vegetable substances he has collected for his research into "magical" cures has provided the material for some of his finest still-life genre paintings in the Spanish tradition. In the eight mural panels he painted in 1947 for the breakfast room of the Hotel del Prado, this material was most effectively used.

In his treatise on the past and present of the Mexican Revolution, the historian Lic. Jesús Ruiz de Chávez has pointed out that that which was good yesterday is not necessarily so today. "The world," he maintains, "is in transition and Mexico especially must adapt its way of life to the type of Mexican who has a new profile."

A new Mexican profile suggests the righting of old wrongs and, concurrently, the need for a new muralism—bold, challenging and objective. In this connection there readily comes to mind the versatile cultural missionary, Francisco Dosamantes, best known, perhaps, for his



DOSAMANTES. "Pregnancy," oil.

distinguished lithographs. In years of travel over the country as a government organizer of art training programs, Dosamantes, born in the Federal District in 1911, has observed the rhythm of daily life in the cities and in the pueblos. His art envelops the many grave problems of his people—problems for which neither Revolución Sociál, the Constitution or the Church have as yet found the answers. With rare courage, he has squarely faced one of Mexico's gravest and most poignant social situations, the uneven struggle of the abandoned unmarried mother to support her children. But beyond the unfair economic aspect of this prevalent condition, the art of Dosamantes has

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probed deeply into the hidden recesses of the maternal heart. It has touched with healing, conveyed by understanding sympathy, the pain of disillusionment, the hurt of shame, the agonized fear of aloneness and ostracism through life's supreme ordeal. In 1957, at the Galería de Artes Plásticas, Dosamantes exhibited a collection of drawings and prints that describe the tragic circle of unwed motherhood—the story of the young household drudge who dwells, as thousands do, in a miserable cubicle on a roof top of the capital. He depicts how, for a fleeting moment, the miracle of birth dominates her fears, her humiliation, even the aching void of bereavement. Her eyes gleam with a flash of triumph as the tiny body of her child clings to her own for warmth and protection. But soon, in the tremendous toll of infant mortality—although steadily and substantially declining since 1920—her baby dies. Again her arms are empty. Now there is no little head

DOSAMANTES. "Motherhood," oil.

DOSAMANTES. "Childbirth," oil.

to caress. Her hands rest idly in her lap. In vain the suffering, the sacrifice, the ostracism, the faint hope. All ends where it began—in nothingness, a pathetic waste of tender, noble qualities.

Dosamantes is now engaged in interpreting the alternative sequence—the grim struggle of the young mother to feed and educate the fatherless child that survives. The depiction on public walls of this and similar problems can not help but arouse the Mexican of the "new profile" to seek and find solutions. The gently persuasive power of mural art, constantly impinging upon the collective awareness, is no less effective today than in Mexico's Golden Age—nor in any period of great muralism anywhere—for the forging of higher concepts of justice, heroism and beauty.

Alma M. Reed

Island of Cozumel, Quíntana Roo
July, 1960

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PREFACE

Mural painting in Mexico is as venerable as the flowering of its indigenous civilizations. Perhaps the greatest pre-Columbian manifestations of this typical art, both dating from the seventh century, are to be found at Teotihuâcán and at Bonampak.

The murals of Teotihuâcán, adorning walls in a group of ruins about half a kilometer from the Pyramid of the Sun, are ritualistic in character, interpreting religious ideas and exalting Tlaloc, God of Rain, upon whose favors an agricultural people were most dependent. The whole series of symmetrical and rhythmic compositions provides a striking example of the ancient artists' ability to combine terrestrial objects and metaphysical concepts in a projection of the symbolism involved in their worship of the forces of nature.

The Bonampak frescoes, generally regarded as the outstanding examples of ancient mural art, have been preserved through the centuries in a tropical jungle in the State of Chiapas. These remarkable works adorn three rooms in a ruined temple referred to simply as "Building Number One." The word Bonampak itself, meaning "Painted Wall," is the name given by the late Dr. Sylvanus G. Morley to a complex of stone structures. Dr. Morley, eminent authority on the Maya, placed the culture that produced the sensational frescoes between 317 and 987 A.D. Believed to have been painted in 692, the murals remained unknown until 1946, when they were discovered in the region of the now almost extinct tribe of Lacandon Indians. They have been evaluated by archaeologists and art critics as the finest pre-Columbian paintings of the Americas. The large surface area covered and the carefully delineated painted scenes indicate that they were executed as a collective project. It is evident that the detailed color applications were made with small brushes on a base of thick lime mixed with an unidentified element.

The work, divided into three parts, represents war. It depicts a battle, the triumph, and the sacrifice of the prisoners. In the triumphal panel, there is a procession of nine elaborately attired personages, three of whom are shown playing musical instruments to accompany six dancers. The mural adorning the second or central room of the temple represents a battle. In his *Ideas Fundamentales del Arte Prehispanica en Mexico,* the critic Paul Westheim maintains that in no epoch nor continent has a battle scene been painted in a more grandiose or fascinating manner. Describing the mural, Mr. Westheim writes: "Here we see the combatants in their sumptuous garments, their shoulders covered with tiger skins and heads adorned with green and yellow feathers, attacking their enemies with lances, clutching them by a lock of hair to take them prisoners. A seething mass of entangled figures in impassioned movement—a chaos of bodies, crowds and colors. Each figure, each gesture, is stupendously observed and transcribed on the wall

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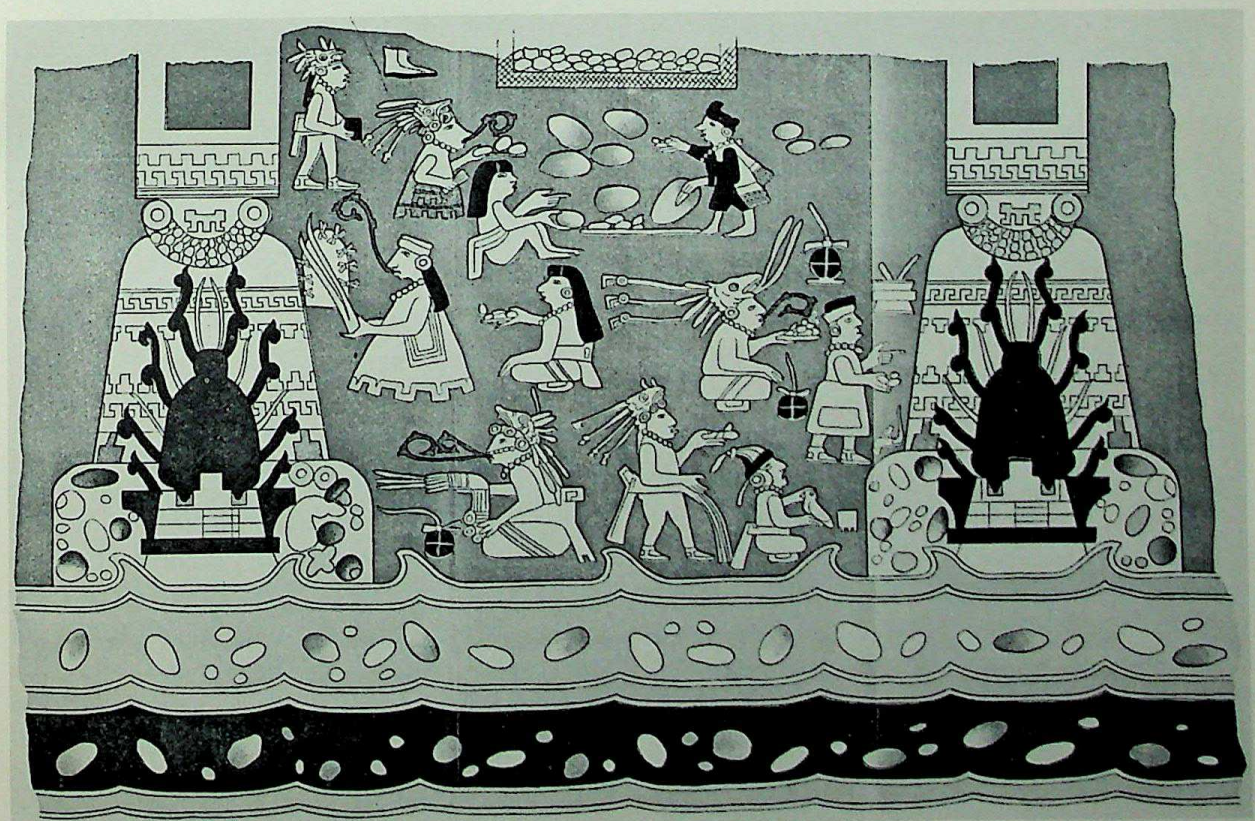
with consummate mastery.

An outstanding example of a pre-Columbian exterior mural is to be seen at Tulum, the ancient Maya citadel overlooking the Caribbean on the Coast of Quintana Roo. The paintings adorn the principal façade, as well as the northeast and southeast corners of a small but imposing structure known as the Temple of the Descending Deity. They depict religious scenes and symbols representing the functions of the gods of the sun, rain and maize. In the lower part, intertwined serpents outline squared panels. Other figures and offerings adorn the lower molding of the cornice, while the central molding carries a line of rosettes carved in relief. The figures of various deities in offertory attitudes are painted on the east interior wall of this temple, and the whole is enclosed within a girdle that symbolizes the night sky, with representations of the sun, the planet Venus and the stars. Stylized intertwined serpents connect the different symbols.

In the most ancient section of a structure at Tulum, the result of various superimpositions and known as the Temple of the Frescoes, we find murals of exceptional interest. Owing to their protected position and to restorations realized by the National Institute of Anthropology and History, the exterior decorations are in a good state of preservation. Executed with superb mastery in a bluish-green color against a black background, they occupy most of the façade, as well as the space between the double moldings. Here again the chief motifs are deities, stylized interlaced serpents and offering scenes abounding in fruits, flowers and ears of corn, all apparently associated with the cult of vegetation. And here, too, like the other



Ancient frescoes, Temple of Agriculture, Teotihuacán, Mexico.

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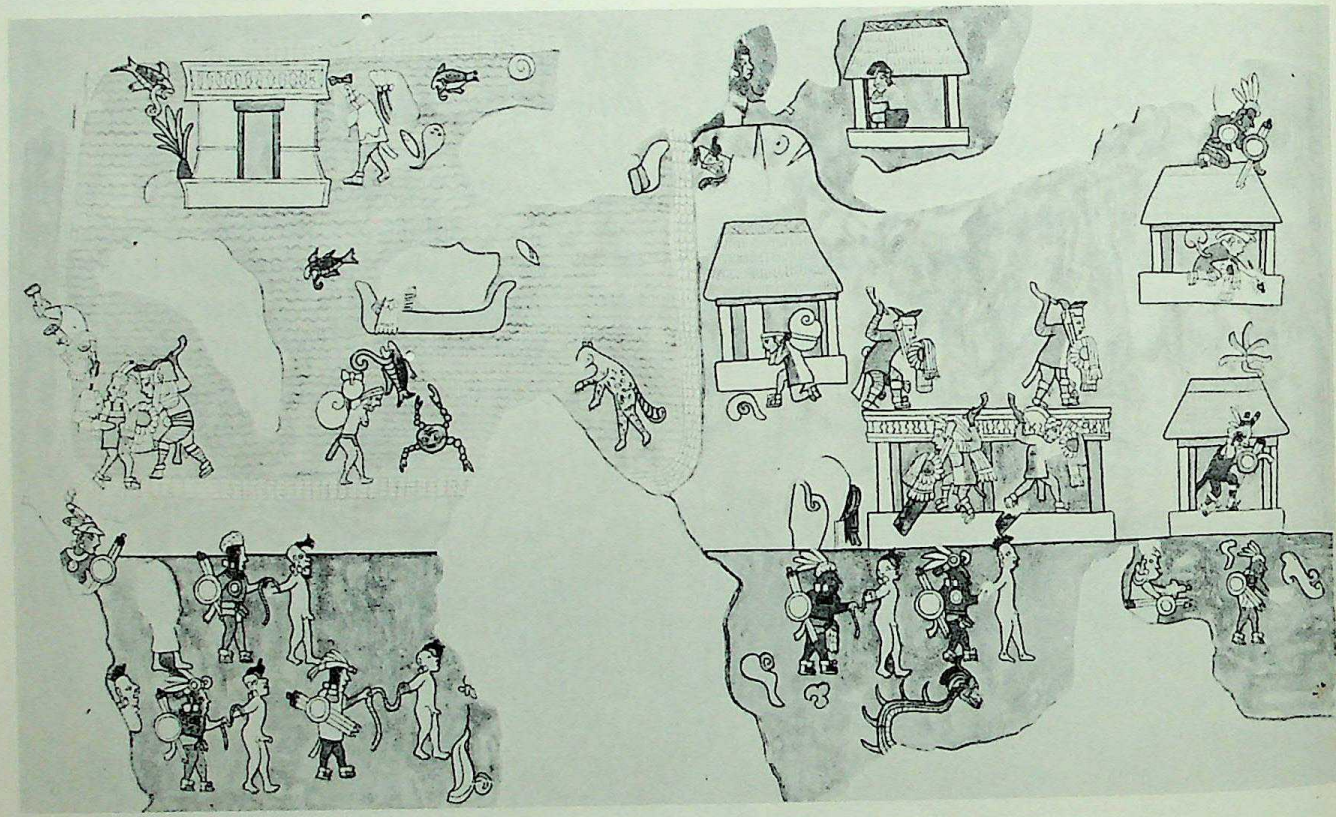
murals of Tulum, they are not realistic but symbolic, and strongly reminiscent of the painted manuscripts of the codices.

It appears from these examples of pre-Columbian muralism and many others we might submit—among them the painting in the interior of the Temple of the Warriors that we studied on our first visit to Chichen Itzá in the directly and dynamically to the people for whose edification it was intended.

In any event, the three elements that today distinguish Mexican muralism may be traced to the principles employed by the painters of ancient Mexico. They laid firm foundations for the collective approach, and the traditions they established have run like the proverbial golden



Ancient frescoes, Temple of the Warriors, Chichen Itzá, Yucatán.

early twenties but that is now no longer visible —that they share certain qualities in common. Apparently these ancient murals were the work of groups rather than of individual artists, and in their religious content they served a social function. There is every indication, too, that in the realm of painting they were the successful results of efforts to achieve an integrated plastic expression—one that was psychologically and ideologically as well as architecturally functional, since the "message" was transmitted

thread through all periods of the national aesthetic production. From the beginning, Mexican muralism has emphasized group projects without prejudice to the individual creative expression. The painters not only worked together toward social goals of mass inspiration and enlightenment in their own respective fields, but were forerunners as well of an "integrated art" that has now become the aim of modern city planners.

The ultra-Baroque, or Churrigueresque,

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style that dominated architecture in Mexico during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries—of which the temples of Tepotzotlán, and Santa Prisca of Taxco, are superb examples—found expression in mural décor of correponding exuberance. Celestial imagery and religious fervor were interpreted on frescoed walls and in huge canvases in a mood and style unrivaled for their florescence. But the highest development of mural art attained during the three centuries of Spanish domination must be placed in the Neo-Classical period—the last half of the eighteenth and the first quarter of the nineteenth century. The outstanding Neo-Classical muralist was, perhaps, Rafael Ximeno y Planes (1761-1825), a painter who followed the European tradition of Giovanni Battista Tiepolo and Anton Raphael Mengs, both credited with restoration of the monumental mural conceived in the grand manner. The most important work of Ximeno y Planes was his decoration of the cupola of the Metropolitan Cathedral, designed by the famous Spanish architect Manuel Tolsa. Another notable example of the murals of the academic master adorn the chapel of the Palace of Mining, in Mexico City. This work, begun in 1813 when the fires of the insurgent movement were still smoldering and the handwriting presaging the end of the Colonial era had already appeared on the wall, shows certain Indian influences. As Dr. Justino Fernández points out, "here Ximeno y Planes has painted Mexican types as seen through classical spectacles."

Throughout the viceregal epoch, the native Mexican artisans had become the communal builders of hundreds of magnificent churches and palaces. The forms of a religiously inspired native art were supplanted by those of foreign origin, although many of the ancient skills were kept alive by the new challenge. The great indigenous mural art, however, was despised throughout the 19th century. As Charlot has pointed out, the only vestiges of the fresco technique that once glorified Mayan and Aztec temples were "humbled to the walls of village chapels and wine shops." But, with the removal of the Spanish yoke, the age-old traditions reasserted themselves—unimpaired and vigorous, if with different plastic manifestations—in the so-called Mexican Renaissance.

The genuinely national movement—anticipated by a century of independence and by more than a decade of restlessness and strikes by Academy students, rebellious against the imposition of foreign methods and influences—dramatically won recognition in the early twenties. Victory inspired the initial "get-together" of the members of the first contemporary "collective," the nucleus of the Syndicate of Painters and Sculptors. The account of this epoch-making social event, as described by José Clemente Orozco, dramatically highlights the radical changes that have taken place over the past forty years in the Mexican art milieu, where today many of Mexico's professional artists write checks on sizable bank accounts and own their own homes and automobiles. "Encouraged over our success," Orozco related, "the group members—impoverished young painters, living in dilapidated quarters in the city's poorest districts like so many characters out of "La Bohème," for most of whom the purchase of a pencil and paper meant grave sacrifice—eagerly accepted Dr. Atl's proposal to organize immediately a society baptized 'Centro Artistico' with the exclusive object of securing from the government walls of public buildings on which to paint murals. At last, we realized our supreme ambition. We rented quarters on the second floor of a house on Monte Piedad. Our inaugural was noisily celebrated with some marvellous macaroons, Italian style, baked by Dr. Atl himself in empty petroleum tins. The edibles were reinforced by rivers of beer supplied by a brewery in exchange for some advertising placards."

But what amounted to an artistic coup d'état, involving the control of the public walls, was possible only through group action and

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the support of the far-sighted Minister of Education José Vasconcelos. Sponsored by the famous Sindicato, the painters and sculptors —most of them participants in the Revolutionary struggle—organized in 1922 on the principle of "one for all and all for one." According to their celebrated "Manifiesto," the members were committed to direct their art toward the "creation of a new world, the socialization of art and to the materialization of a vigorous aesthetic expression for the people."

Common effort and experimentation, and the pooling of the creative ability of such outstanding personalities as José Clemente Orozco, Jean Charlot, Diego Rivera, Roberto Montenegro, David Alfaro Siqueiros and Xavier Guerrero, resulted not only in the revival of the lost technique of "true fresco" but restored to mural art the grand manner and the heroic mood that had exalted the function of the public muralist over the centuries. The painters working in the spirit of guild craftsmen, and in the employ of the federal government at a fixed daily compensation, created the "Golden Age" and established Mexico as a world center of modern muralism. Moreover, their monumental frescoes, particularly those of Orozco, Rivera and Siqueiros, projected the ideals and aims of the Social Revolution with such clarity and effectiveness that art became a vital factor in winning world-wide respect for the new government.

Evaluating the significance of the new mural movement, one of its chief participants, Jean Charlot, has declared: "The Revolution proved useful mostly as a cog, the piece of machinery needed to join together ancient walls and young muralists. To make frescoes possible it was imperative that there be men in power unafraid of public opinion. As it turned out, ca. 1920, these upper dog *politicos* were, in fact, desirous to ram down the throats of the bourgeois the consciousness of defeat and a squirming sense of their social predicament. Bohemians in their 20's, at most their 30's were given public walls to paint as other men had been given palaces to sack, but the resentment at such a breach of etiquette, being of a cultural nature, simmers up to this day."

Charlot relates that these frescoes, once so roundly condemned, finally became a source of national pride and even an international asset. He points out that "not even the aging men who commissioned the works when they were so young, as a lusty *beau geste,* understand how it all came to pass, but they breathe the more easily."

His explanation of the dramatic outcome is that the artists themselves felt that the walls of noble seasoned buildings they were commissioned to paint "dictated a task *vaster than a display of personality.*" If their work was to be successful, they knew that it should prove to be something more—"a mouthpiece for collective feelings, which, at the time, ran their gamut from the passionate mayhem of active revolution to the stilled depths of meditation that precede and follow action wherever Indian blood is concerned."

The collective feelings found a more immediate outlet in *murales carteles* (paper murals), which at the same time gave the first real impetus to Mexico's modern graphic techniques. If today Mexico occupies a foremost world position in the various fields of the engraver's art, it is because a group of daring young experimenters responded to a profound spiritual need on the part of the masses.

After a decade of upheaval resulting from the long sanguinary conflict, and because for millions the transition from serfdom to freedom was so abrupt, it was essential that the Mexican people know the future toward which it was moving. There was a need, too, for clarifying the objectives of the struggle that had taken such a heavy toll of life and property, as well as for vividly stating achievements to date. The Mexican love of celebration had to be made exultantly aware that the sufferings and perils of the road over which the

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nation had traveled to stability were really at an end. And it was felt that the national pride in Revolutionary gains was best satisfied with "before and after" pictures, a synthesis of comparative values that art alone is able to effect.

Clarification, of course, was the fundamental aim of Minister Vasconcelos when he inaugurated the mural movement. But the glorification of national aspirations and humanist ideals, as interpreted with painstaking artistry on the walls of public buildings, was at best a slow process. The situation called for a mass communication medium—a charting of the way ahead through methods that were swift and cheap. The need was met by the *murales carteles.*

In order to attract the greatest audience, these printed paper murals—large double-sheet posters of dynamic design and striking in their juxtaposed colors—were displayed on every available wall. Jet-black figures and symbolic patterns, against backgrounds of coral pink, jade green or vivid yellow, were found to be the most eye-compelling combinations to convey the Revolutionary message.

The *murales carteles* had the advantage, too, of the familiar, since they followed the general make-up of the *corridos* that recorded the passing scandals and the fame of local heroes in popular ballads. All illustrated with engravings by Posada, these *corridos,* which were often potent political broadsides, sold by the thousands, for a few centavos each, in the years preceding and during the Revolutionary epoch.

The story of the *murales carteles* was told to us recently by Gabriel Fernández Ledesma, who was chiefly responsible for their popularity. Ledesma, whose scholarly publicizing of the early muralists provided an invaluable stimulus to the Mexican Renaissance, continues to guide Mexico's young artists as teacher of advanced painting at the San Carlos Academy. He also continues to pursue his own important aesthetic creation in a century-old studio near the bustling center of Villa de Guadalupe. There he outlined for us the development of the significant movement that was destined to produce new forms of typography and from which later emerged the Talleres Gráficas de la Nación.

Ledesma explained that the *murales carteles,* while socio-politically slanted, were authentic art expressions. Their themes frequently embraced tributes to proletarian systems and hailed the welfare state at the expense of capitalism. But they were invariably of aesthetic value and technical excellence. In one series, each of the six sensational designs was accompanied by a poem. One of these poems, in the form of a *manifiesto,* was addressed to the poets themselves, urging them to cease writing about roses, violets, the moon and babbling brooks, while there was "so much sorrow and trouble in the world." The scribes were advised to divert their talents to more fundamental human issues.

Thus, owing to their widespread diffusion and to the plastic clarity of their ideologic content, the *murales carteles* wielded enormous influence.

Serving purely cultural ends was another type of paper mural. Known as *carteles anunciadores,* they heralded musical and dramatic attractions and educational opportunities offered by the government. For years many of Mexico's leading artists collaborated in the profuse production of these graphic announcements, which were of various sizes, of all types and in diversified media—engraving, lithography, etching, woodcut, monotype, aquatint. Among the most active in the field was a group composed of Diego Rivera, David Alfaro Siqueiros, Leopoldo Méndez, Alfredo Ramos Martínez, Maples Arce and others, who organized themselves as the ".30-.30," with the aim of promoting Revolutionary objectives. The name .30-.30, derived from the small .30-.30 rifle used with such effectiveness by the Zapatistas during the Revolution, was

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symbolic of the common purpose to cleanse the political scene with the devastating power of caricature or the dramatization of abuses.

An outstanding agency for the development of woodcut techniques was the *Revista del Sembradores,* edited and illustrated by Leopoldo Méndez, who later became the motivating spirit behind the organization of the Taller Gráfica Popular and its first director. Some of the Leopoldo Méndez woodcuts, notably his famous "Vision," executed in 1945, have been credited with having the force of a large-scale powerful mural.

Closely associated with Ledesma in the pioneer graphic effort of Mexico's Golden Age was another distinguished figure in contemporary art, Francisco Díaz de León. During a recent visit to his lovely home in Coyoacán, the versatile artist, who also continues to serve his country's cultural interests in the Editorial Magisterial, described to us the humble beginnings of modern Mexican engraving. The first to be convinced about the importance of the graphic medium, he related, was Fernando Leal. Some boards of cedar, a wood that has long been employed by the majority of engravers, were procured for Leal, as well as for Jean Charlot, who was working with him at the Ramos Martínez open-air school. The virtue of this particular wood, Díaz de León explained, was that the white, capricious line of the fibers appeared with the first printing, as in a negative, and permitted even the most uninformed to see that the result was true wood engraving. Díaz de León said, "I followed with keen attention the work of both artists, and at last I decided to buy a set of chisels and chucks such as they were using and which would serve to engrave as well as to print, if the paper placed upon the well-inked board were rubbed with the handle of the instrument itself. One fine day in 1922, I tested out my idea, and dull and stammering upon an old pine board was born my first engraving. Thus, I had fallen into a trap from which I have never been able to extricate myself."

Díaz de León recalled for us the memorable Book Fair of 1924, held in the Palace of Mines through the incentive of Vasconcelos. "It was the occasion," he related, "for showing to the public for the first time the great curiosity of a collection of wood engravings, executed *de hilo,* or on the horizontal cross section of the wood, by Gabriel Fernández Ledesma together with one of my own in which linoleum—a material with which we had been experimenting for some months—was used."

At the same event, Díaz de León recalled, Don Valerio Prieto made known his intention of using the scratch-board process, so much in vogue today. He employed a resource of his own invention that consisted of spreading a coating of black ink over small enameled bricks, later scraping the white parts of the drawing to imitate the carvings of the wood engraving.

During this same year appeared the celebrated book *Urbe,* by Maples Arce, a volume for which Charlot had engraved a frontispiece in two colors—a portrait of the author—and five illustrations. It was the first book of this century to be made in Mexico in a modern engraving process. The volume scandalized the timid, since the brutal note of black—the essence of the graphic arts—was completely shocking to academic tastes.

This singular book was followed by another in 1925, written by Mariano Silva y Aceves and illustrated by Díaz de León with 54 engravings in which, for the first time, wood engravings executed with the grain *de pie,* or upright, appeared alongside the others, engraved in linoleum. "In reality," Díaz de León explained, "wood engraving had for me a close relation with a knowledge of carpentry acquired in my youth. Consequently I arranged the board with the care of a professional. For me, fortunately, it was relatively simple to master the engraving on upright woods or even in the laborious Japanese style."

The teaching of graphic arts in Mexico

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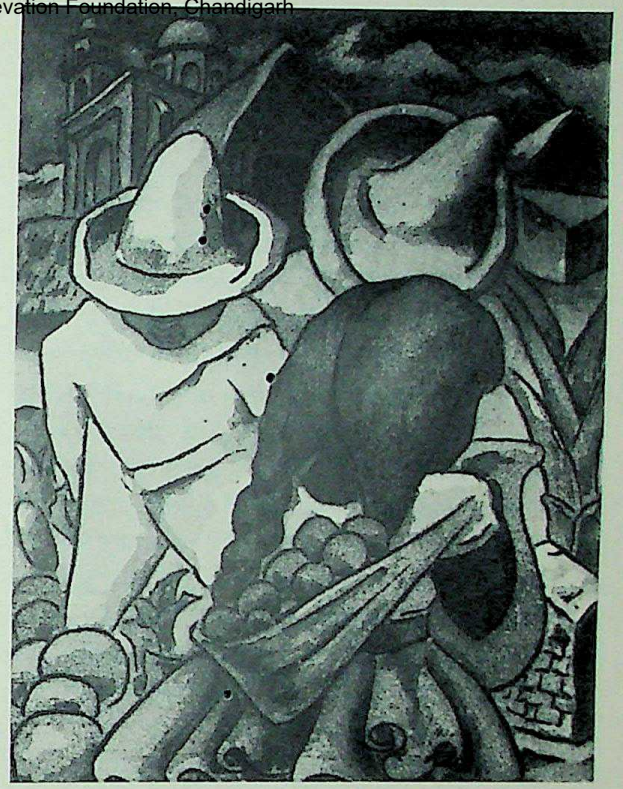
dates from 1925, the era in which open-air schools of painting were founded at Xochimilco, Tlálpan and Guadalupe Hidalgo. As director of the Tlálpan School, Díaz de León inaugurated a course for the young students who attended the afternoon classes. The results were truly remarkable, he recalls, especially when the children interpreted the rural scenes they knew so well. Among the most talented boys in this field were Feliciano Peña and Manuel Echauri, both of whom were destined to become well-known painters. That same year, in Guadalajara, Carlos Orozco Romero published an album containing the engravings of his pupils at the Preparatory School, a work titled *The Young Wood Engravers,* with a prologue by Charlot.

'Twenty-five was also important to Mexican *grabado* for the general public's discovery of the now world-famous José Guadalupe Posada. In June of that year, an article written by Jean Charlot was published in the weekly *Rivista de Revistas,* hailing Posada as the real precursor of modern Mexican art and up to that date an unrivaled Mexican artist. "For simple folk," wrote the astute French-born painter-author, "the work of Posada is beautiful and for the critic accustomed to analyze, it is full of revelations." From this moment the prolific creation of the engraver from Aguascalientes became an inspiration for young artists, who studied it in order to learn the secret of his monumental compositions.

To his illuminating article on Posada, Charlot added another on the nineteenth-century engraver Manuel Manilla, which was published in the magazine *Forma,* edited by Ledesma. Once again Charlot called attention to the great importance of Mexico's popular arts and to their extraordinarily rich imaginative concepts.

An historic exhibition of wood engraving was held under the auspices of the "30-30" in January, 1928. Among the exhibitors were Ramón Alva de la Canal, Charlot, Xavier Guerrero, Siqueiros, Leal, Orozco Romero,



DIÁZ DE LEON. "Rhythms," an aquatint.

Fermín Revueltas, Rufino Tamayo, Peña, Tesorero and Chabela Villaseñor—a group that represented virtually all the engravers of the epoch. This highly successful event was followed by another in the Pasaje America, on Avenida Cinco de Mayo, and later by a third in the Galería Carta Blanca, on Avenida Madero. The thirty woodcuts exhibited by Díaz de León were later included in an album dealing with little-known aspects of the popular arts. It carried, as a foreword, a scholarly study by Manuel Touissant on the history of engraving in Mexico. Ledesma was also one of the outstanding contributors to this memorable exhibition.

Other collective movements followed. A decade later Liga de Escritores y Artistas Revolucionarios, known as LEAR, enlisted the enthusiastic adherence of the then younger artists as well as the "giants" of the Mexican Renaissance. Both groups lent their talents to the universal assault on fascism. The third

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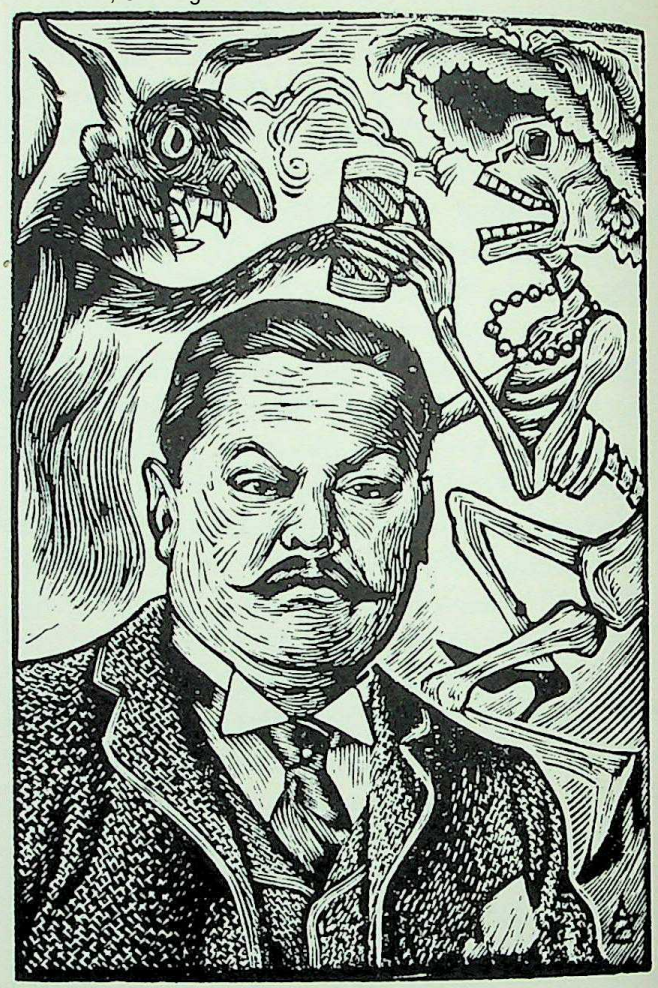
collective organization in recent times, Impulsora de Artes Plásticas (SIAP), represented a departure in that it stressed the necessity for collaboration of architect and muralist. The SIAP organization urged a return, within the framework of modern design, to the "integrated art" of the ancient Mexican builders. Architects were among the most active members of SIAP. In some cases, as in that of Juan O'Gorman, muralist and architect were one. The important contributions of SIAP are to be seen at University City, in the striking SCOP building, the Social Security Center and others that now glorify the Mexican capital. The rich and functional decoration of these streamlined structures is due largely to the artistry and craftsmanship of "second generation" artists, including José Chávez Morado and Jorge González Camarena with such veterans as Siqueiros and Rivera.

In 1955 Roberto G. Berdecio conceived the plan of an artists' business enterprise with a gallery owned and operated by artist-stockholders, with the ascetic Francisco Goitia as its first president. But the group, known as AMUSA—United Mexican Artists, Inc.—was short-lived. AMUSA's vigorous proclamation of principles, however—especially freedom from the fetish of the art cult—exerted a wholesome influence. Mexican and foreign resident artists of all schools were welcomed as members. Painters widely apart in technical method and ideologic concept made common cause in the "new deal" for the artist. The sensitive water colorist, General Ignacio Beteta, and Dr. Atl, masterly interpreter of Mexico's volcanoes and precursor of the Golden Age, were both enthusiastic stockholding members. Like its parent organization, Frente Nacional, AMUSA supported the right and duty of the painter to express the aspirations and struggles of his people, their traditions and progress. Without dogmatic imposition, it endorsed a plastic of ideologic content, "useful and clear in its message and in its educational function for the popular masses."



ZAMARRIPA. José Guadalupe Posada, from an engraving.

Growing out of the ingenious AMUSA plan is the new organization, Union de Pintores, Escultores y Grabadores de Mexico. Founded in July, 1959, its board of directors includes many of Mexico's leading artists, among them Juan O'Gorman, Jesús Guerrero Galván, Jorge González Camarena, José Reyes Mesa, Raúl Anguiano, Francisco Dosamantes and Roberto G. Berdecio. The members subscribe to the following declaration of principles:

"Defend culture and tradition. Foment the production of plastic arts by stimulating their renovation and development. Safeguard the professional interests of the painters, sculptors and engravers of Mexico. Fight for liberty of expression, particularly in the field of art. De-

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fend the conservation of our archaeological monuments, the patrimony of the Mexican people. Work for the creation of a modern art museum that will facilitate exhibitions, art publications and conferences. Promote the publication of monographs, individual and collective. Promote the purchase by the Government of paintings, sculpture and engravings in order to form the artistic patrimony of the modern museum and prevent the loss of these works through acquisition by collectors abroad. Promote cultural exchange and organizations of artists whose demands are legitimate and in accord with the collective interests."

Times and customs, along with the economic outlook for Mexico's artists, have changed, but the collective dedication of Mexican painters to the public service remains an unchanging national value.

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ADOLFO BEST-MAUGARD

The title of Precursor of the Contemporary Mexican Art Movement—with its brilliant climax in Golden Age muralism—may perhaps more legitimately be claimed by Adolfo Best-Maugard than by any other painter. With characteristic modesty, however, he will tell you that the credit for the epoch-making achievement really belongs to Dr. Atl. In any event, it was Best-Maugard, whose life pattern has been accurately described as a relentless quest for fundamentals, who first inspired a universal interest in Mexico's varied and abundant popular arts and stimulated the Mexican people themselves to a genuine appreciation of their own aesthetic heritage.

It was in the zealous, experimental twenties, during the full flowering of the Mexican "Renaissance," that we first met the painter-philosopher. For several years he had been engaged in a program of mass education. Working through 150 supervisors, many of them professional artists, he trained some 200,000 pupils of Mexico's schools in the principles of his method for creative design, based on the "seven symbols" common to all primitive art.

Among his youthful helpers were many who were destined to become Mexico's leading painters. The group included Carlos Mérida, Abraham Angel, Emilio Amero, Julio Castellanos, Leopoldo Méndez, Rufino Tamayo, Miguel Covarrubias, Manuel Rodríguez Lozano and others of equal distinction.

But long before he launched his system of teaching, Best-Maugard had the vision of a Mexican art based on his country's rich and varied popular art production. At that time, with the ending of the long and bloody Revolu-

BEST-MAUGARD. Self-portrait, oil.

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tionary conflict, the resurgence of national hopes took shape in the vigorous, newborn art movement. Except for the murals of Orozco, Siqueiros, and one or two others, the first manifestation of the movement was a glorification of the aboriginal culture to the exclusion of other elements of the Mexican tradition. In an article published in January, 1930, in the magazine *Creative Art,* we commented on this situation as follows: "To one group, freshly returned from Paris to take part in the decoration of public buildings under the patronage of José Vasconcelos, Minister of Education, the effort to create a new national aesthetic offered a timely pretext for the direct importation of Cubism and the personal achievements of Picasso and Braque. The result, as the Mexicans would say, was the same old Cubism with a different handle. The influence of the African Negro sculpture in the French variety was discarded for the influence of the Aztec and Maya monuments and the dwarfed figures of the ancient codices."

In our personal evaluation of the trends we observed that "those who interpreted the Revolutionary challenge as a voice from Mexico's long-vanished past took their archaeology undiluted."

BEST-MAUGARD. "Mexican Girl," oil, 1923.

From the very beginning, no Mexican artist was in a better position than Best-Maugard himself to appreciate the significance of the ancient indigenous art heritage. He had been familiar with pre-Hispanic forms since 1911, when he was commissioned by the celebrated anthropologist Franz Boas of Columbia University to copy thousands of specimens of pottery from the Valley of Mexico. During this research he noted the constant recurrence of certain decorative motifs, and, upon comparing them with the ancient art of other cultures that he encountered in the museums of Europe, he deduced the theory that the art production of the entire human race relies principally upon seven primitive motifs common to all lands and to all periods of history.

These elements, he further discovered, correspond to the various emotional states and are the normal psychological expressions of these states, since emotion produces motion. He found, for instance, that violence is expressed by the zigzag and that the greatest violence is always represented by this line. The universal art alphabet, he perceived, is dictated by morphology rather than by mathematics.

Two major achievements of Best-Maugard's earlier years established him as a true, modern-day pioneer in the effective dramatization of the beauty and original character of Mexican popular art. The first was the world-famed "Ballet Mexicana," which the artist designed —costumes, setting, choreography—for the Russian ballerina Anna Pavlova when she visited Mexico in 1918. The ballet, with a

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musical score by Castro Padilla, was presented at the dancer's final scheduled appearance in the capital. It proved to be such a tremendous success that she decided to prolong her stay for another month. For years the international public acclaimed the charm of Mexican popular art, as interpreted by Best-Maugard, through Pavlova's performance of his "Ballet Mexicana" in practically every world capital.

The second great impetus the painter gave to the appreciation of his country's popular art was through his gala pageant "Noche Mexicana," presented in 1921 at Chapultepec Park as a feature of the centennial observance of Mexican independence. Staged on the lake beneath an enormous arch, this colorful fiesta, for which Best-Maugard designed all the costumes, fountains, booths, scenic effects and a 200,000 peso display of fireworks, combined in brilliant array the colorful folk handicrafts, together with the enchanting native dances and music, dramatizing for the Mexican people the splendor of their national inheritance.

Best-Maugard began on the premise that the popular arts rather than archaeology was the logical basis for a national art, since the former was an expression that emanated constantly from the entire Mexican population and not from the races of some long-vanished yesterday. In 1922 he became head of the Federal Department of Art Education, a post created for him by José Vasconcelos. He accompanied the enlightened educator—frequently referred to as the Master of the Americas—and Diego Rivera on a visit to Yucatán as guest of the progressive governor Felipe Carrillo Puerto, and he later traveled to other archaeological zones of the Republic to compare the ancient monuments and popular arts of the respective regions. The results of this intensive study strengthened the artist's conviction that pre-Columbian races were only partly responsible for the distinctive character of Mexico's present-day popular art.

In the total picture, Best-Maugard found that other racial influences were equally important. Two centuries of flourishing trade with China—the frequent arrival at Acapulco of the treasure-laden *buques de Cathay,* the caravans that bore the precious cargoes of silks, ivories, porcelains, ceramics, paintings, fans and jewelry overland to Mexico City, to Puebla and to Veracruz—left their radiant imprint on native color, form and decoration.

Of prime importance, naturally, in shaping the native art was the heritage of the great aesthetic tradition of Spain—*la madre patria* of the Conquistadores, of thousands of Spanish settlers and their *mestizo* descendants.

In his book, *Tradition, Renaissance and Evolution of Mexican Art,* published in 1923 by the Ministry of Education in an edition of 40,000 copies, Best-Maugard analyzes these basic influences and attributes to each its individual role in the brilliant ensemble of popular Mexican art creation. The author points out that one of the indispensable colors in embroidery and in the decoration of *jícaras,* toys, lacquered gourds and chests and polychromed *barro* is the so-called shocking pink —a color unknown to the pre-Columbian craftsman.

The ancient indigenous decorator was confined to white, earth-red, yellow, black, green and one kind of blue. This range adequately served his purposes, since his painting was symbolic in aim and appeared, evidently, only in fresco murals of structures identified with ritual use, or in the pictographic records of the codices. Both the Spanish conquerors and the Chinese merchants greatly enriched the native art, not only with a new color feeling but with fresh attitudes and a wide variety of decorative motifs. Combined with the native arts, these exotic currents produced the distinctive and fascinating product that we recognize today as Mexican popular art.

Best-Maugard's efforts were directed to the people at large and not to the professional painter. In back of his identification and isolation of the several primitive elements was a desire to give to the average Mexican artisan

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—in a clarified and co-ordinated form—the means of carrying on his instinctive pursuits with greater ease and efficiency. With self-confidence there were bound to be better results and consequently larger financial rewards. Best-Maugard hoped that a sort of art alphabet would provide a more direct approach for the most unlettered manual worker in his daily tasks of weaving, embroidery, modeling, toy-making, wood- and leather-carving or decorative painting.

Defining his art alphabet, he explains that its seven basic forms correspond to the notes in music, or to the seven primary colors in painting. The forms, lines that are graphic motifs, are all projections of a single form, the helix. This basic spiral may be stretched out, so to speak, to a straight line or presented as a wavy line, a zigzag, a circle and other forms. All art expression is limited to this alphabet, which is timeless and universal. Even the scratches of the earliest artists on walls of their caves reveal these seven forms.

In no sense did Best-Maugard intend his system to create artists of the type that have established world renown for Mexican painting. His method was designed strictly for a people with an innate need for producing lovely objects with their hands and for a nation that, despite its relatively small population, ranks third, after China and Japan, in the quantity production of manual arts—and whose able craftsmen are endowed with a true aesthetic sense. He was quite willing to leave the development of genius or outstanding talent to the academies or to the master painters.

With the aid of his 150 accomplished assistants, who trained the teachers, Best-Maugard set in motion an enormous production, by school children, of decorative painting and drawing that was to provide material for striking exhibitions in Mexico, the United States and European countries for a quarter of a century. Even today, many of these remarkable collections are being circulated and still serve to call public attention to the inherent artistic gifts of the Mexican child.

In Mexico, however, the whole idea met with opposition, even open rebellion, at first, from many teachers trained in European methods. Some scoffed at what they termed "drawing inspiration from hideous idols." Blackboard comments such as *"la audacia suple al talento"* ("boldness takes the place of talent") frequently appeared. But throughout the heated controversy, Best-Maugard recalls, Rivera was his staunch ally, even fighting some of the ideological battles with his fists.

At the climax of this cultural movement, Best-Maugard brought a collection of children's paintings to our native San Francisco during the course of a lecture tour of the United States. We recall the mild sensation aroused by his presence on the campus of the University of California, especially among coeds, as well as among our fellow students at the California School of Fine Arts, where the Mexican painter lectured in his impeccable and effective English. His tall, slim figure and distinguished bearing, his elegant manners and the facial expression that conveyed a certain mystic luminosity evoked the universal comment that he might have stepped out of an El Greco canvas. In any event, he was an admirable good-will ambassador at a period when relations between the two neighboring republics were not quite so cordial as they are today—when, in fact, the rank-and-file Mexican referred to the United States more or less humorously as "the monster of the north."

Best-Maugard's lectures and demonstrations not only provided fascinating information on the art of Mexico, they proved to be a genuine stimulus north of the Rio Grande among groups then consciously seeking light on their own cultural origins and groping for the road to an authentic American continental art. A little later, in 1926, the artist rendered an additional service to the art lovers of the United States through his English-language book *A Method for Creative Design*. This

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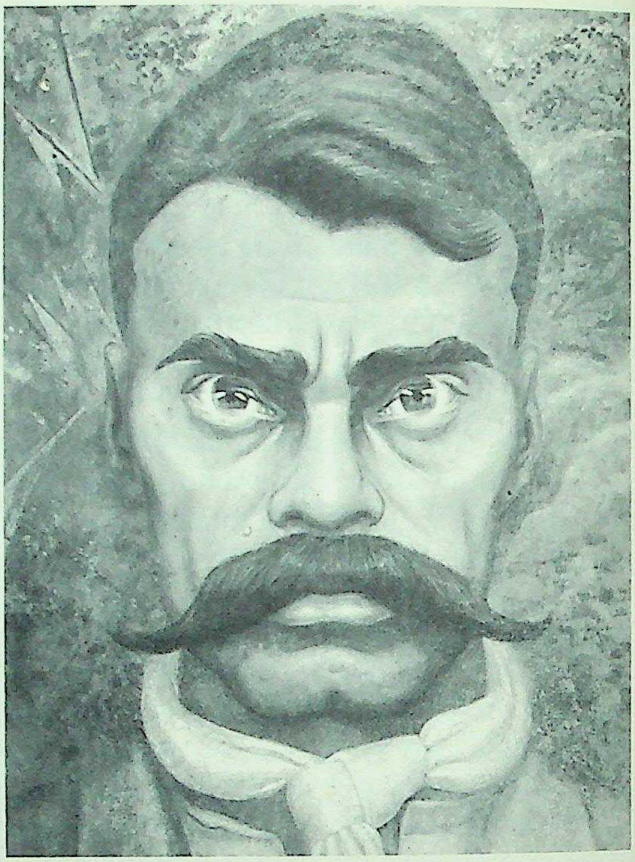
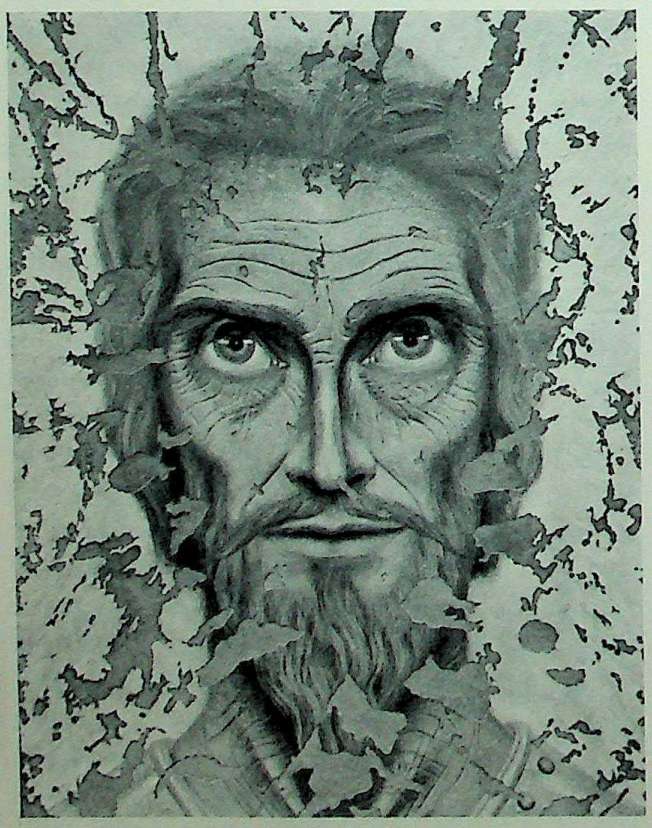
work, which has since gone into many printings, provided the United States with its own native art alphabet, duplicating the contribution that the painter had made to his countrymen in his earlier Spanish-language volume on the same general theme.

Today in the United States the widespread effort to achieve a national aesthetic expression that will reflect New World origins is taken for granted. But it must not be forgotten that the real pioneer in the quest for artistic continental identity was the Mexican painter Best-Maugard, endowed, perhaps, with a deeper understanding of the complex North American cultural problems because of his own mixed English, French and Mexican ancestry. His stimulating lectures, books and, above all, the attractive material that he produced in support of his theories led many artists and students in the United States to seek the aesthetic elements on which they, too, might build—in the folk art of Pennsylvania, Maine and Massachusetts, in the Latin traditions of California, New Mexico and Texas, in the Indian reservations of Arizona, Florida and the great Northwest.



BEST-MAUGARD. Portrait of Emiliano Zapata, oil.



BEST-MAUGARD. "Don Quixote," oil.

Recently we discussed these achievements of the "good old days," with the painter in his beautiful Fundicion *taller*-residence. As we sat in his glass-walled studio, which looks out upon a miniature jungle filled with flowering trees and giant tropical plants, he told us of his latest quest. Still youthful in appearance, manner, attitude and ambition, still the perfect El Greco model, still the kindly, elegant gentleman—even improved a bit with the gentle mellowing of the years—Best-Maugard spoke to us of his new work. He spoke with his habitual modesty, but the pictures were eloquent in their own behalf.

These paintings—a collection of large psychological portraits and interpretations of his-

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toric personages and types—appear to change roles with the person looking at them. Each canvas, with its own life force, seems to be judging the spectator, probing to the depths of his consciousness, divining his hidden thoughts and innermost secrets. Each picture, too, establishes, through the eyes, an intimate contact and active communication with the spectator. The painter related that he began working in this field about seven years ago, after having abandoned painting for over twenty-five years, devoting the long interim to a study of the problems he now analyzes on canvas. The idea of telling the life story or delivering the deepest message through the eye occurred to him, he said, while studying ancient art in the museums of Europe. The revelation came, he explained, after analyzing numerous portraits by Coptic artists on Egyptian sarcophagus covers and the mosaic figures of Byzantine religious art. When we asked him to define his discovery he replied succinctly: "Fusing duality to rebuild unity." The living quality and the profound expressiveness achieved in his portraits he attributes to the unification of duality in the eyes.

Art has many facets, but we do not wonder that critics find the paintings remarkable by any standard. Still more remarkable are Best-Maugard's continuing quest for eternal verities and the consistency displayed throughout his life in serving his nation and humanity.

ROBERTO NERVO MONTENEGRO

The chronology of Mexico's Golden Age begins with Roberto Nervo Montenegro. Yet at no point in the long and brilliant trajectory of the veteran painter's varied career does his work reflect greater plastic vigor or a more contemporary thematic concern with social problems than is revealed in his latest mural, "Exodus de Sud Africa." Mounted on a movable frame, this significant interpretation of the tortuous advance of the South African Negroes toward their goal of human dignity was a major attraction among the scores of canvases exhibited in the September, 1960 Biennial at Mexico's Palace of Fine Arts. Bearing on their shoulders the body of a dead comrade, four emaciated, dark-skinned victims of Apartheid are shown treading a twentieth-century *Via Dolorosa,* a road strewn with menacing bayonet points, barbed-wire entanglements and other symbols of the violence generated by racial hatreds and man's inhumanity to man, while beneath a blood-red sun a scene of desolation merges with a metallic sky on the distant horizon.

Born at Guadalajara, Jalisco in 1885, Roberto, like other talented young *tapatíos* of the period, came to the capital for training at the National Academy of San Carlos under the celebrated Fabres. Among his fellow students were Saturnino Herrán, Diego Rivera and others destined for fame. At the Academy young Montenegro distinguished himself by a set of drawings both elegant and imaginative—the most highly prized qualities of that romantic pictorial era, predominantly influenced by Aubrey Beardsley.

In 1906 he went to Paris on a scholarship and pursued his studies at the École des Beaux Arts, remaining there until 1910, when he left for European travel and independent study, finally settling in Majorca in 1914.

He returned to Mexico in 1920 and soon afterwards formed a strong and enduring friendship with José Vasconcelos, Rector of the National University under Huerta and later, 1920 to 1925, Minister of Education in the Obregón government. In his attempt to raise the general cultural level of the country

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MONTENEGRO. "Exodus from South Africa," mural painting.

by reorganizing and modernizing the school system and bringing to the people the best in art, drama, music and literature, Vasconcelos invited Montenegro to work with him on the art features of the program. The over-all aim was to make the average Mexican more deeply aware of his nationality and cultural heritage.

In 1921, as an initial step toward a new and thoroughly Mexican art orientation, Montenegro staged an exhibition of Mexican popular arts patterned after a Russian exposition he had seen in Paris. Montenegro was assisted by Adolfo Best-Maugard in the assembling and artistic presentation of the abundant and diversified material for the exhibition. The same collection was sent the following year to Los Angeles, in charge of Best-Maugard and Xavier Guerrero.

Meanwhile, Montenegro had been commissioned to paint murals in the former chapel of the Convent of S. S. Pedro y San Pablo, the first ecclesiastical edifice to be converted, under the government program, into a workers' library and group discussion center. The large-scale tempera decoration, titled "Dance of the Hours," was completed in 1922.

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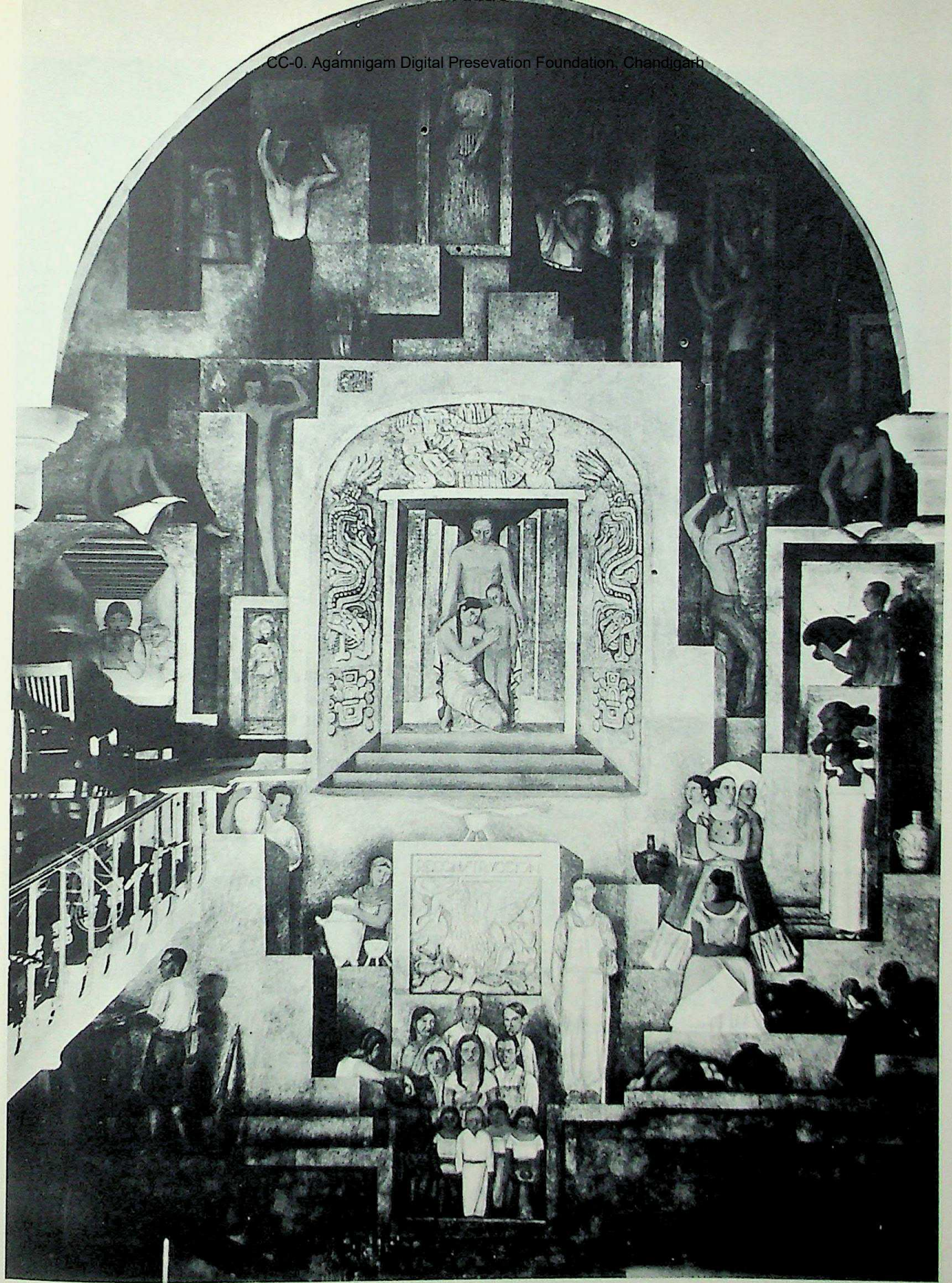

MONTENEGRO. Fresco in convent of Carmen annexed to San Ildefonso School.

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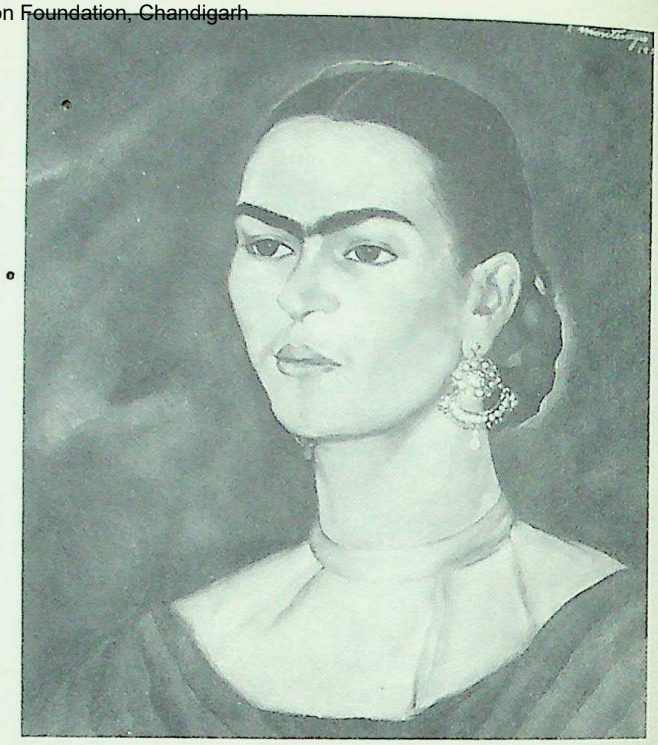
MONTENEGRO. Self-portrait.



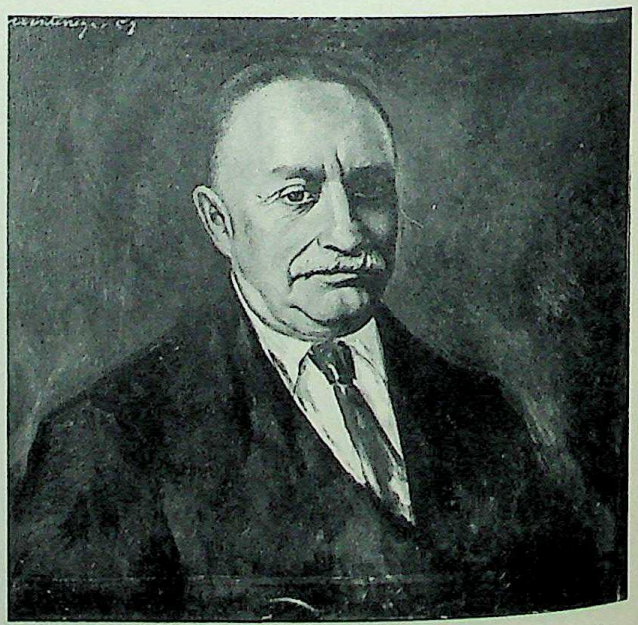
MONTENEGRO. Portrait of Frida Kahlo.

Thus Montenegro became the initiator of the plastic phase of the Mexican Renaissance and the founding father of the new mural movement. His historically interesting painting is to be seen today in Mexico City at the Hemeroteca Nacional, the periodical section of the National Library.

Between 1923 and 1931 Montenegro was engaged in decorating the stairways of Secondary School Number Seven, a project embracing 128 paintings. The colorful series, titled "La Fiesta de la Santa Cruz," revealed his knowledge of Mexico's popular arts and his love for the traditional creations of his people.

In 1923 he also executed murals in the reception room of the Ministry of Education, and other murals followed in rapid succession. Among the buildings decorated by the prolific artist during this period are the Biblioteca Hispano-Americano, 1924; the theatre of the National Normal School and the library of the Benito Juarez School, 1926-27; and the court of the National Preparatory School Annex, 1928. On several occasions he was commissioned by the government to decorate Mexican pavilions at international expositions.

Montenegro is regarded as the interpreter par excellence of the seventeenth-century



MONTENEGRO. Portrait of Lic. José Vasconcelos.

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MONTENEGRO. "La Loca de la Casa," oil.

poetess Sor Juana Inéz de la Cruz, and his portraits of the beautiful and gifted nun who occupies an exalted place in Mexican literature adorn several public and private libraries in the Mexican capital.

Montenegro's knowledge of Mexico's rich and varied handicrafts, gained during years of research in remote villages, resulted in his 1934 appointment as director of a popular arts museum. The same year Antonio Castro Leal commissioned him to design scenic stage sets for *Le Simoun,* by Lenormand. His paintings have been exhibited, in distinguished one-man shows, in Paris, London, Buenos Aires, New York, Barcelona, Palma de Mallorca and, on numerous occasions, in Mexico. He has written, illustrated and published several books and many monographs on his own work, the popular arts and nineteenth-century painting. A pictorial biography of the great dancer Nijinsky is one of his best-known books. He has painted scores of portraits of celebrated personalities, including Diego Rivera, Orozco, José Vasconcelos, Dr. Atl and Frida Kahlo.

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In 1940 Montenegro was put in charge of the popular arts section of the exhibition of Mexican art held at the Museum of Modern Art in New York.

Discussing the artist, Agustín Velásquez Chávez hails his achievements in Mexican plastic arts as the "versatility of genius" and comments: "An etcher, a draughtsman, a painter, an engraver, a scenic designer, he has illustrated books, he has engraved on metal, wood and lithographic stone; he has decorated libraries and halls, he has been a publisher of books, an investigator of popular arts and a tradesman in toys, adornments and objects."

Throughout the past half century, in Mexico's unending social revolution, the cause of culture has enlisted no more gallant or steadfast defender than Roberto Montenegro.

JOSÉ CLEMENTE OROZCO

José Clemente Orozco, Mexico's most powerful and significant muralist, was born November 23, 1883, in Zapotlán El Grande, also known as Ciudad Guzman, in the State of Jalisco. His parents, Ireneo Orozco and Rosa Flores, both of exceptional education and culture, were natives of Jalisco and the descendants of early Spanish settlers and officials in the first *ayuntamiento,* or municipal government, of the original City of Guadalajara. Genealogical research has proved the painter's kinship to Agustín de Iturbide, who ruled Mexico as Emperor Agustín I between 1822 and 1824, and to the Catholic priest Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla, revered as the initiator of Mexican independence.

The influence of his mother, a talented musician who also liked to paint, was considerable. In later years Orozco would tell stories that indicated her independence of mind. Although a devout Catholic, she would defend her son's "impieties" in paint against her own parish priests. "What my son does, Your Reverence," she would say, "is art. I have no right to tell him *what* to paint. Neither have I the right to tell him what *not* to paint. Only God and his conscience have the right to instruct him!"

When the boy was six years old the family moved to Mexico City. His father, who had many interests, including the first printing plant in Ciudad Guzman, had suffered business losses. The child was enrolled in primary school, but on his seventh birthday, at his own insistence, he began to attend the San Carlos Academy night classes in linear drawing.

An important influence in shaping his career was the fact that on his way to and from school he passed the shop where the engravings of the great satirical artist José Guadalupe Posada were exhibited in the window. He would stand in deep fascination, staring at the trenchant caricatures, and sometimes grew bold enough to enter the shop and watch the master at work. "It was my first revelation of the existence of the art of painting," he has said.

While making progress in primary school, where he was being trained for the teaching profession, he was regarded as phenomenal by the instructors. Lic. Isidro Fabela, diplomat and author of several books on Mexican history and international affairs, gives us a vivid word picture of Orozco in his early school days:

"Clemente was a quiet, introspective boy, with an almost feminine reserve. He was al-

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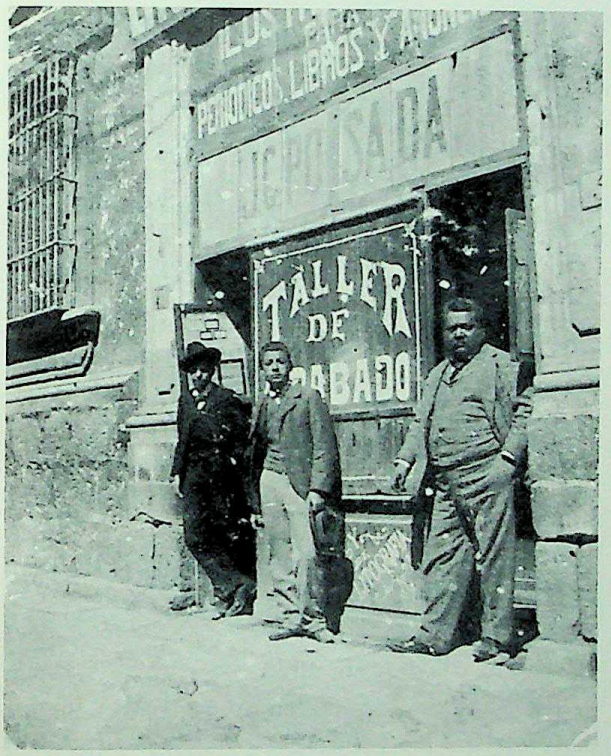
ways neatly, though inexpensively, dressed. He was very well behaved and we all knew that he had a great heart. . . . He used to amuse us drawing *muñecos*—figures—which he did with remarkable facility. Even then I recognized his rare talent as an artist. . . ."

On completing his primary studies he was awarded a scholarship at the National School of Agriculture in Chapingo, and in 1900 he



POSADA *(at right)* in front of his famous *taller,* or shop.

was graduated from this institution as an expert agriculturist. He soon entered the National Preparatory School to study architecture. As the result of an explosion in a chemical experiment, he lost his left hand, wounded his right hand and impaired the sight of one eye. This once and for all determined his pursuit of the career that he secretly cherished. He argued that architects were "socially fit," while artists were "poor devils," and that in his maimed condition he now felt free to become "one of them."

During his Preparatory School course he had specialized in mathematics and received various honors for his excellence in this field. His training in architectural drawing at the School of Fine Arts, and his experience as a draughtsman under the eminent architect Carlos Herrera of Mexico City, provided admirable preparation for the painting career on which he now embarked.

In 1909 the young Orozco began an intensive formal course of self-training at the San Carlos Academy, drawing and painting from life and making anatomical studies. One of his classmates of this period, the late Jesús Ibarra, said in recalling Orozco's student days: "He seemed to be interested only in the training he was receiving and evidently had no idea of getting a diploma. This astonished all of us, since his work showed a new sense of color and a new idea of figures. While respectful of Nature, he was apparently striving to project his own personal vision, as his remarkable anatomical studies reveal."

In September, 1915 Orozco held his first one-man exhibition of paintings and drawings. This was known as the "House of Tears" series; the theme was prostitution. The entire collection was a bitter criticism of hypocritical society.

Orozco's revolutionary tendencies had emerged a few years earlier, in 1911, when he was active in the student strike at San Carlos, which was headed by Raziel Cabildo and the same Jesús Ibarra. Orozco also joined the group of artists and art students that went to Orizaba under the leadership of Dr. Atl following the second occupation of Mexico by the Carranza forces. He illustrated the *Vanguardia,* a Revolutionary paper edited by Dr. Atl, throughout this period of the Revolution.

In 1917 the painter visited the United States for the first time. He went to California, where he remained for two years. As he was crossing the international border at Laredo,

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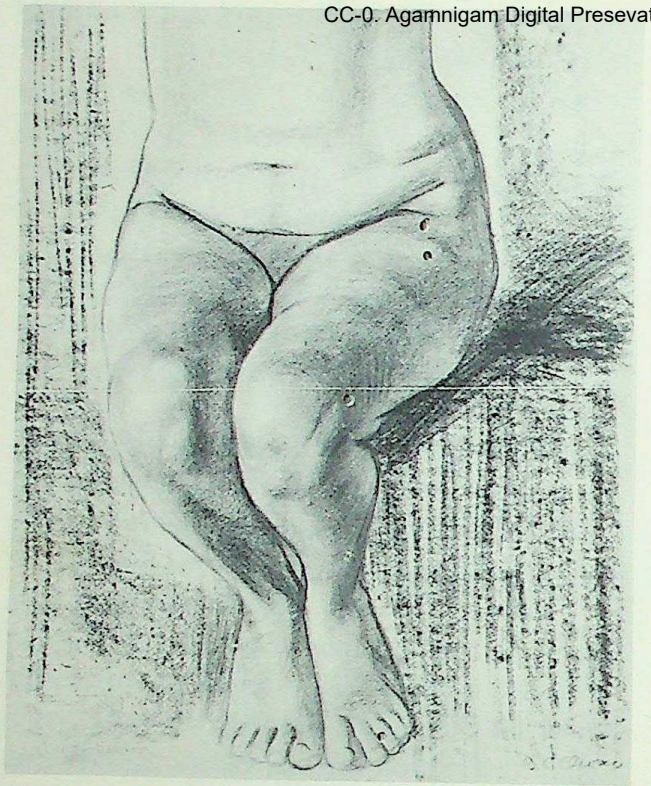
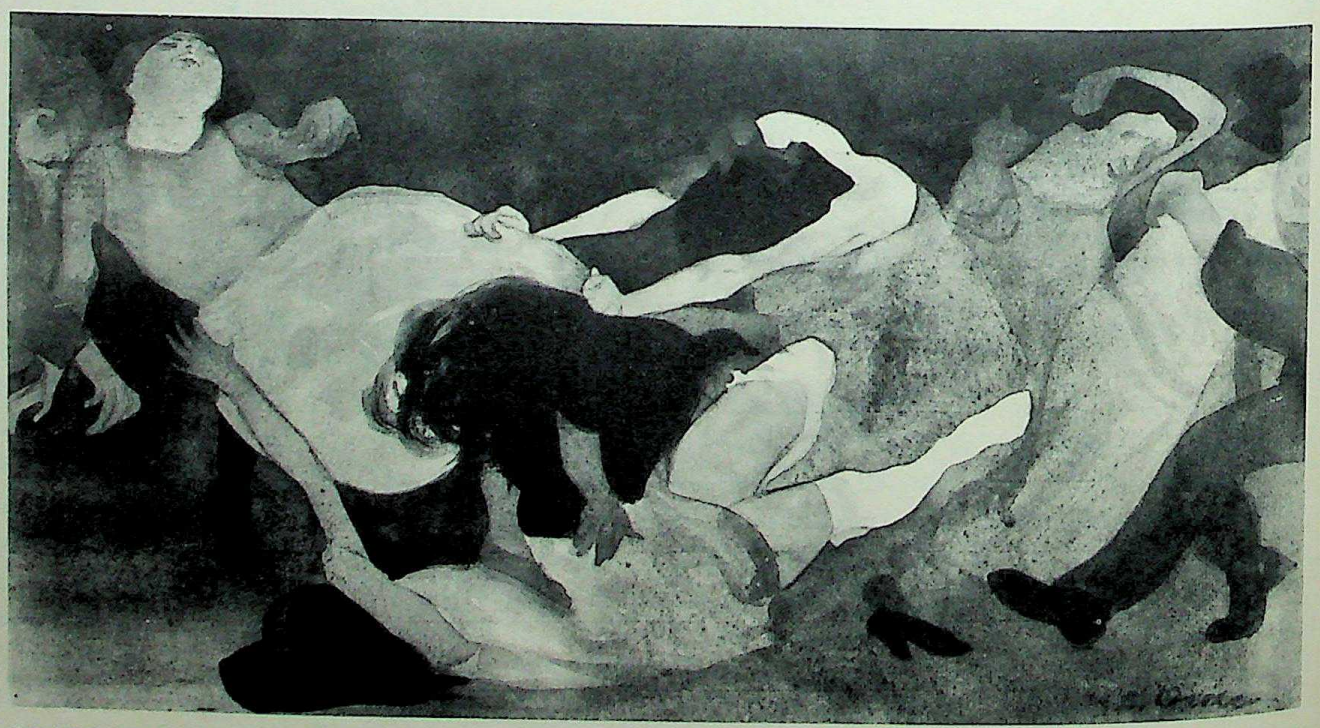


OROZCO. Charcoal drawing of the female torso, study for a mural.

OROZCO. Study for a mural.



OROZCO. "House of Tears," water color.

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OROZCO. "Christ the Worker," detail, frescoes, National Preparatory School.

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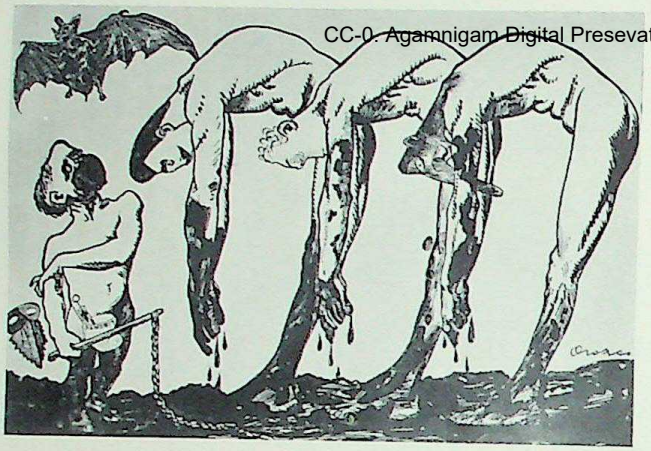


OROZCO. "Madero and the Servile Politicos," caricature.

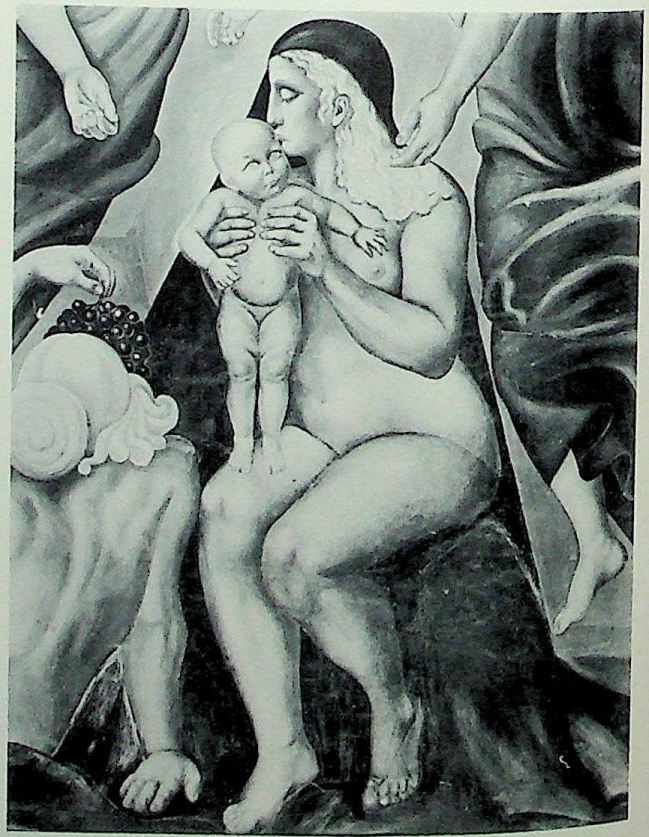
Texas, a minor official in the Customs House destroyed sixty of his water colors in the "House of Tears" series because they were "indecorous." This tragic occurrence prevented Orozco from pursuing his art career during his stay in San Francisco.

At that time Orozco made some illuminating remarks concerning the new techniques displayed in the "House of Tears" series. He had broken with the "open-air" group. "I preferred to paint in black and in the earth colors that had been excluded from the Impressionist palette. Instead of red and yellow twilights, I painted the pestilential shadows of closed rooms, and instead of stolid Indians, drunken ladies and gentlemen."

Orozco returned to Mexico after a brief visit to New York and worked for a while in the Ministry of Education, illustrating an edition of the classics for José Vasconcelos, Secretary of Education. Throughout this period he contributed caricatures to various leading newspapers and magazines, gaining the reputation of a "formidable political power," since it was said that his devastating satiric drawings could "make or unmake presidents."

In 1922, as a member of the Syndicate of Painters and Sculptors, the *Sindicato,* he was commissioned to decorate the patio walls in the National Preparatory School, and thus he became one of the most active and successful experimenters in the revived fresco technique. In July, 1923, on the eve of beginning his mural painting, he declared in an interview: "My one theme is *humanity*. My one tendency is *emotion* to a *maximum*. My means, the *real* and *integral* representation of bodies in themselves and in their inter-relation." His masterly panels of the Revolutionary Struggle, the Ancient Races, the Conquest and the New Order were hailed by international critics as "the greatest mural painting since the early Italians."

The vast project of decorating the walls of the patio's three floors was interrupted on several occasions by sabotage on the part of orthodox bodies who objected to Orozco's frank and historically faithful interpretations of church-state relations. In June, 1924, a year after Orozco had begun his monumental project, a student mob armed with sticks and stones, with decayed vegetables and rotten



OROZCO. "Maternity," fresco, National Preparatory School.

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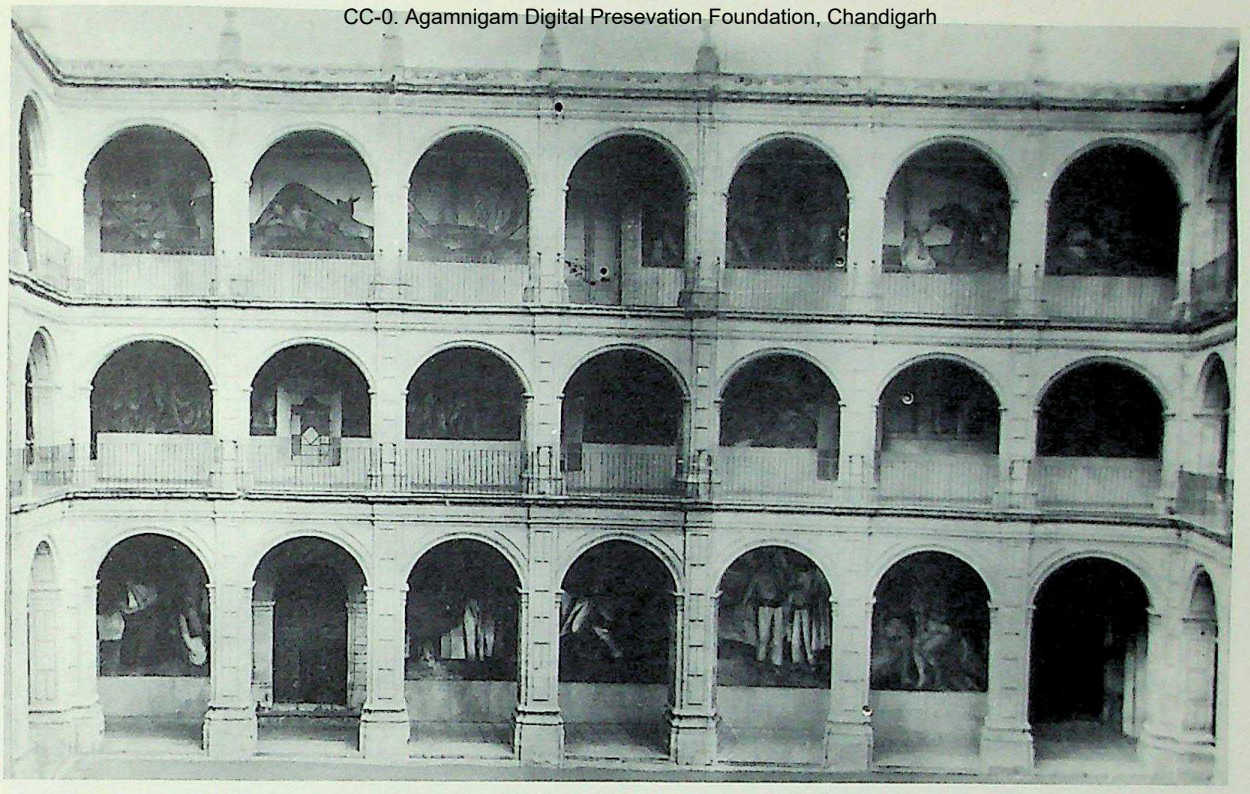

OROZCO. Panoramic view of fresco murals in Great Patio of National Preparatory School.

eggs, defaced and even partially destroyed some of the noblest panels, among them the religious painting "The Franciscan and the Leper."

Commenting on the vandalism in the review *Eureka* in August, 1924, Charlot wrote: "Newspapers and magazines have reported the event as if it were a jolly joke. The kick of the ass to the dying lion was given with fervor by a young poet whose connoisseurship is deficient enough to say that Orozco is a follower of Diego Rivera."

However, as a result of petitions from thousands of Mexican and foreign art lovers, and through the personal solicitude of Dr. Alfonso Pruneda, Rector of the National University, Orozco returned to the patio to repair the damage and complete the third-floor walls.

But, in the interim, Orozco had become disillusioned with some of the Revolutionary leaders, doubting their volition or ability to fulfill the glowing promises made to their loyal

OROZCO. "Cortez and Malinche," detail of fresco, National Preparatory School.

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OROZCO. "The Politicians Feast While the People Starve," fresco mural, National Preparatory School.

followers during the years of sacrifice and bloodshed. About this resumed work Charlot, with his unfailing sympathy and understanding, observed: "Begun as a paean to the Revolution, one panel ended as its bitter condemnation." The murals were finally completed in 1927.

Meanwhile, Orozco had received his first private commission. This was the decoration, in fresco, of the grand stairway of the House of Tiles, on Avenida Francisco Madero in the nation's capital, for the building's owner, the late Francisco Iturbe. The mural, "Omnisciencia," was built around the universal theme of the "Life Principle." During this period (1926) Orozco also decorated the stairway of the Industrial School of Orizaba with a large-scale fresco, "Revolution," a project initiated by Dr. J. M. Puig Casauranc.

These years (1922-26) embraced Mexico's Golden Age of mural painting. Art flourished under José Vasconcelos, but after he left his post in 1924 there was a slow decline. He had furnished the walls and had given the artist free scope to express himself. Now, in 1927, there were no more available public walls.

Late in that year Orozco went to New York, where he began a period of easel painting, interpreting the mechanized forms of mass production in a series of oils and lithographs.

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OROZCO. "The Trench," National Preparatory School, Mexico, D.F.

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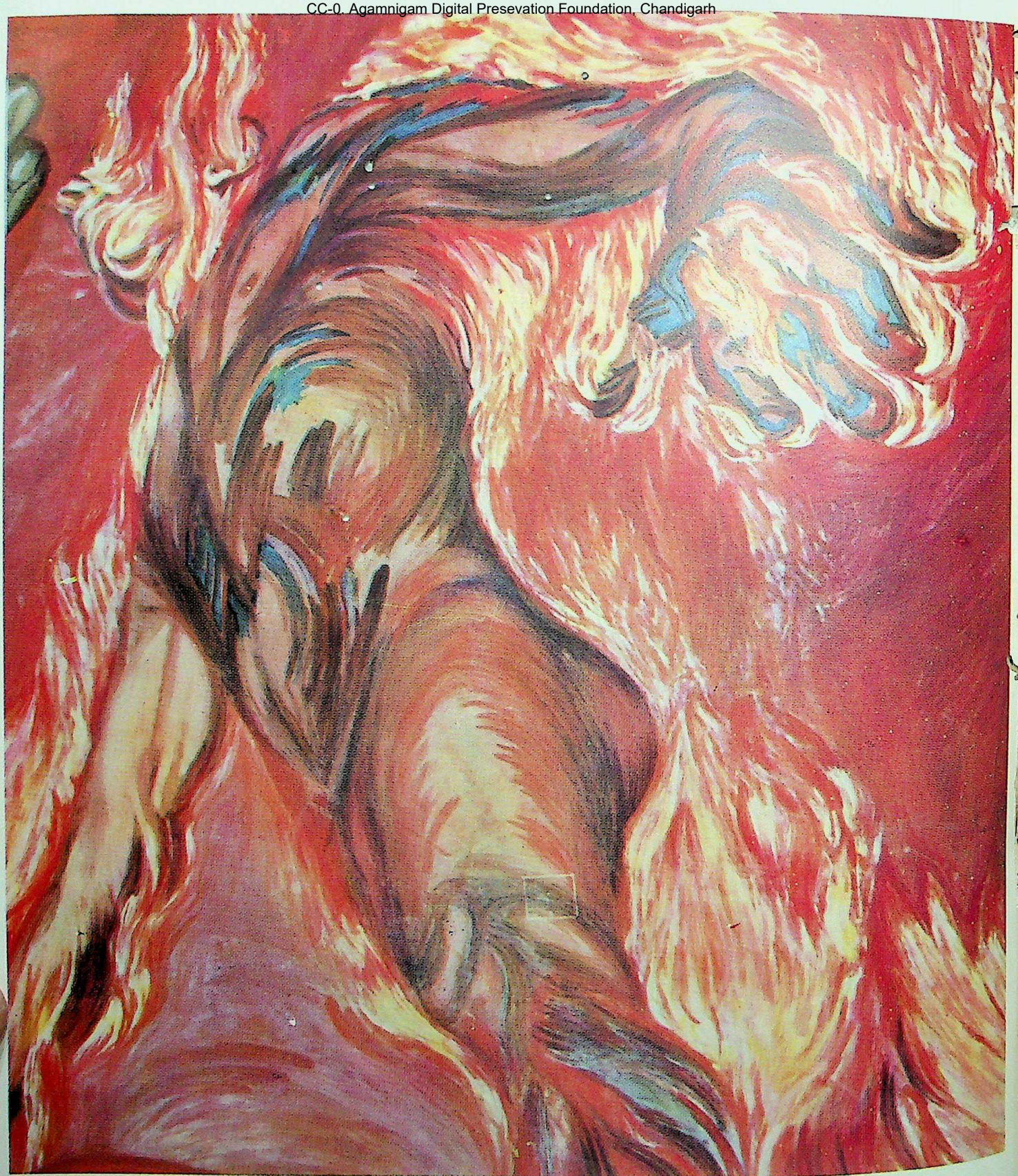

OROZCO. Detail, "Man of Fire," Hospicio Cabañas, Guadalajara.

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OROZCO. "Christ Destroying His Own Cross," Dartmouth College.

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OROZCO. "Trinity," National Preparatory School.

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OROZCO. "An Aristocrat Dances," wash drawing, from "Mexico in Revolution" series.

These, together with a collection of drawings titled "Mexico in Revolution," were exhibited in New York and in the major cities of the United States under the auspices of the Delphic Studios, founded and maintained by Alma M. Reed for the promotion of Orozco's works.

A collection of Orozco's paintings and drawings of all periods—113 items plus a complete set of enlarged photographs of his Mexican murals—was shown at the Art Students League of New York in April, 1929. The event was widely publicized in the United States and Mexico and evoked enthusiastic reviews from the critics. As a result, requests for exhibitions came to the Delphic Studios from every part of the United States and from several European countries. During this period the artist's work was acquired by leading North American museums, and his drawings were exhibited in Paris, Vienna and Budapest. The series "Mexico in Revolution" and the mural studies were hailed by Dr. Hans Tietze,

OROZCO. "Prometheus," mural, Pomona College, Claremont, Calif.

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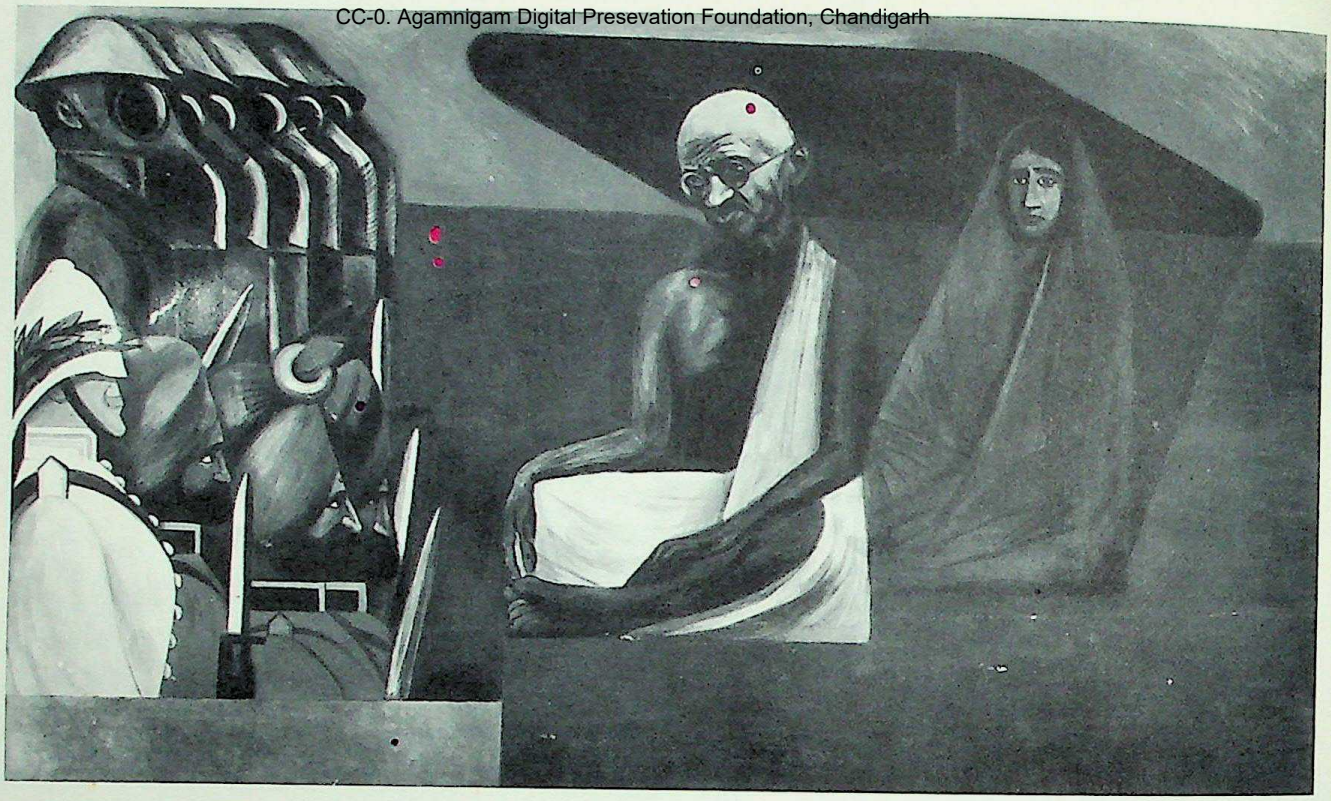

OROZCO. "Gandhi," fresco, New School for Social Research, New York.

Director of the Albertina Museum of Vienna, as "creations worthy of any of the old masters."

In 1930 Orozco executed a dynamic mural on a Gothic arch in Frary Hall at Pomona College, Claremont, California. This monumental fresco, titled *"Prometheus"* and interpreting the thankless but epochal role of the rebel, was hailed by local and European critics as "the most living wall in America." Orozco then decorated the dining room of the New School for Social Research, on West Twelfth Street in New York, with frescoes portraying the forces shaping history. He also projected his own vision of social justice, the brotherhood of nations and a peaceful world freed from exploitation and aggression.

In 1932 Orozco began the decoration of the Baker Library at Dartmouth College, in Hanover, New Hampshire. This was just after his first visit to Europe, which involved a trip of three months' duration through England, France and Spain. The Dartmouth theme, "The Epic of Culture in the New World," linked sixteenth-century militarism with triumphant twentieth-century mechanization, and contained sharp criticism of the social, educational and economic systems of North American culture. Commenting on the murals, Lewis Mumford stated that Orozco had "demonstrated the fundamental kinship of both types of power production, that of the soldier and of the new capitalism."

Meanwhile, in October, 1932, the first book on Orozco's works in any language—containing 258 full-page reproductions and written and edited by Alma M. Reed—appeared under the imprint of the Delphic Studios, New York, the author's personally owned publishing house. As part of the record, the introduction to this book is appropriately included here, almost in its entirety. Since the material met with the artist's complete approval, it should serve to clarify his aesthetic and ideologic motivations, as he himself evaluated them. Moreover, it provides a personal view.

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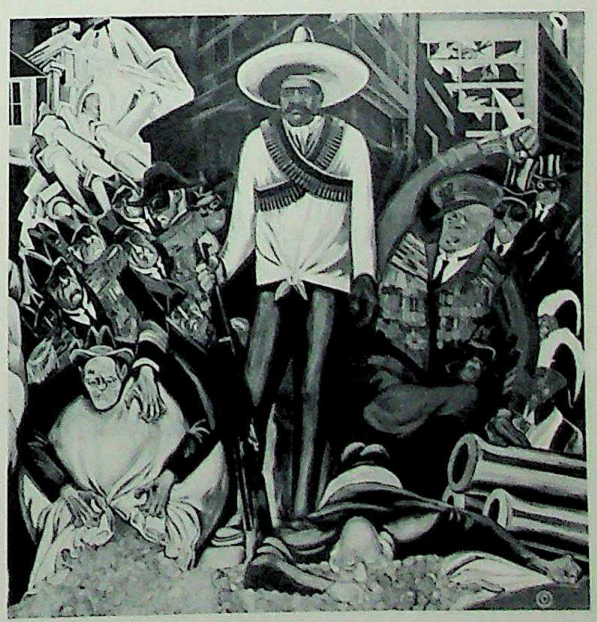
OROZCO. "Quetzalcoatl and the Ancient Order," fresco mural, Dartmouth College, Hanover, N. H.

of several scenes and characters of Mexico's mighty plastic drama, the staging of which, in the early 'twenties, we were privileged to attend.

"In Orozco's case, however, we deal with certain plastic facts and vital issues outside the rigid domain of technicality. Identified with the changes and portents of the world today, his art is an integral part of the drama evoked by the crash of age-old systems and the reversal of once immutable scientific laws. The identification is not established by restricted and standardized subject matter or an arbitrarily chosen post-war style. Orozco may paint Saint Francis or Pancho Villa, a child or still life, Lenin or Prometheus, and each will emerge from his brush as a contemporary value. The liberated attitude of the artist alone serves to illumine our particular intersection of time and space. In his characteristic 'thrusts of power beyond the reach of conscious art' the very spirit of the present demands and finds expression.

"The most casual observer will be impressed by the wide variety and enormous scope which this record reveals. In the comprehensive use



OROZCO. "Latin America," fresco, Dartmouth College.

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OROZCO at work in his studio.

of his craft the field ranges from political cartoons for the daily newspaper to the monumental walls of public buildings. Yet whatever the medium, occasion or cost to himself, Orozco insists upon the right to erect and to destroy his own platforms. In Mexico, in the wake of the armies, he frequently caricatured and denounced through the Revolutionary Press the corrupt generals and grafting officials as scathingly as he did the enemy reactionaries.

"Orozco's position as a public painter has a timely significance when so many theories and even national experiments are striving to define the artist's relation to the masses. His efficient and implacable line, the balance struck between a cultivated and disciplined intellect and the emotional urge, the dynamism and inevitability of his conceptions would be recognized by the masses as their own, if any immediate contact between the real artist and the real masses—as it existed for the Cathedral Builders of the Middle Ages—were again made possible.

"Such contact might have taken place during the latest period of Mexican mural painting to which Orozco made so important a contribution. In any event, here, fortuitously, and only for a short while, were assembled all the elements essential to a Renaissance. Skilled artists, material resources, the eagerness of the masses, and above all, an indomitable spiritual force, welding idea and ideal. That now historic movement still flings a stern challenge to the irresponsible slogan: 'Let's have a Renaissance for no reason at all!'

"In 1922, after a decade of constructive revolution, the young generation of Mexican painters returned from the battlefields and from enforced or voluntary sojourns in Europe. Taken under the patronage of the Revolutionary Government, they were entrusted with the decoration of the walls of some of the fine Colonial buildings of the capital and of the many new schools erected at that time as part of the ambitious program of José Vasconcelos, Minister of Public Education.

"From the days of the Colony a typical Academy had flourished in Mexico. In 1912 the artists broke violently with its fossilized curriculum and demanded artistic as well as social and political renovation. Modern ideas then in ferment here and abroad and a new taste formed by ideals of the Revolution and sharp realities of the conflict clamored for expression. As a result, ten years later, the group of leaders including Orozco organized themselves into the Syndicate of Painters and Sculptors. Their central aim was public painting. Around this idea they rallied passionately, giving it wide-spread publicity through manifestos and 'conferencias.' Art was to represent the people. The romantic Rodolphe sipping absinthe in his attic studio was no longer to be tolerated. The painter must descend from his rickety ivory tower, work for a laborer's wage and become an active man of affairs, as

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keenly alive to the issues of his day as any statesman or journalist. Emulating the great periods, art was once more to become a popular cause.

"By its very nature this work, sponsored and paid for by the Government, could be executed adequately only on walls. Since it was necessary to paint large surfaces, the plan demanded a complete change of technique. All the media appropriate to mural painting were considered and tried—encaustic, tempera, and finally, fresco. None of these media were new to Mexico. Fresco, especially, had been known for centuries to all the indigenous civilizations, notably the Mayan of Yucatan.

"From the beginning, Orozco was interested in the rediscovery and the development of fresco. After long research and experiment he worked out with the help of the native masons a technique which proved to be so efficient and so complete as to compare favorably with that of European and the aboriginal American fresco painters.

"Unhampered, the various artists of the mural group worked along the lines of their personal aims and experience. There was naturally a marked divergence in aesthetic tendencies according to the individual background, training and temperament. The recent arrivals from Europe brought with them not only the influences of the latest Parisian 'isms,' but reminiscences as well of their travels through Italy. Native influences were very powerful. There were the rich and varied popular arts and the magnificent archaeological remains, which continue to yield new plastic wealth with every turn of the excavator's spade.

"Up to that time, Orozco had never been in Europe. His entire life with the exception of two years in California (1917-1918) had been spent in Mexico, and he was subject, undoubtedly, to all the local influences. He saw clearly, however, that slavish imitation of ancient or popular art would be highly illogical in the call for new symbols. The functional difference between applied arts and mural painting rendered the handicraft motifs useless, however well adapted they might be to textiles and pottery. It is one thing to decorate a cushion and another to decorate a wall. And while Orozco was fully aware of the unique plastic power of the Mayan and the Aztec sculpture, he realized that the creative cycle which produced those immortal works had closed in some long-vanished yesterday and would not reopen to the spiritual needs of today or tomorrow. Huitzilopóchtli, grim god of Human Sacrifice, represents a discarded religious and artistic motivation for twentieth-century Mexico no less inevitably than does Memnon for the modern Egyptian or Hera for the present-day Athenian.

"Orozco's first effort, therefore, was to organize his experience, technique and research, so that it expressed his own personal relation to the rare opportunity before him. The Cubist importation from Paris whole-heartedly adopted by a large group of painters offered him no starting point. He rejected it as exotic, as he later drastically rejected that hybrid style resulting from the combination of Mayan, Aztec, Parisian and Spanish Colonial elements, which was eventually established in the official mind, at least, as the so-called Modern Mexican School.

"An important problem that Orozco faced at the outset of his five years' labor on the National Preparatory School was the functional harmony between his painting and the architectural structure. He avoided the short cut of monotonous repetition or the mere orderly arrangement of similar figures. His idea of architectonic unity was based upon a fundamental dynamic rhythm, as in the human body, where parts as different as the head, the hand or the foot are united under the same system of proportion. The goal was a symphonic ensemble, not a series of fragmentary and disconnected anecdotes.

"Social convictions—the Revolution—furnished him with his principal theme. In the choice of subject matter, as in the choice of

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OROZCO. "The Trench" *(also shown in the color section)* and "Destruction of the Old Order," fresco murals, National Preparatory School.

technique and medium, the Mexican painters were completely free. There was no attempt to dictate propaganda or to impose technical specifications. The artist was regarded as a responsible worker over whose output no committee, politician or contractor had the slightest control. I recall an occasion in Mexico City in the early days of the movement, when Vasconcelos visiting the murals in progress called up to an artist on the scaffold: 'I heartily dislike what you are doing. It is terrible! But the wall is yours—Go ahead!'

"In 1927 Orozco came to New York. He attracted immediate attention and was encouraged to remain and enter the activities of his new environment.

"During the last few years art in the United States has gone through swift evolutionary stages or mere cyclical recurrences as one may prefer to state the case. From an exaggerated Parisian influence it has passed to flag-waving nationalism; from the fetish of the Zuloaga toreador to the glorification of the American primitive. New York, surpassing Paris, has become the colossal battle-field—in fact, absorbing Parisian production.

"In the midst of the struggle the Mexican painters appeared on the scene with reinforcements that have not been unwelcome. Certainly, the Mexican bourgeoisie was at one time under the spell of Paris, but Mexico is, after all, as hard and impenetrable as its black zapote wood. Against the insolent irony of the pulqueria, the soft blandishments of Parisian aesthetics are unavailing. In the end the most Parisian-minded Mexican painter found himself helpless with the poor weapons brought from Montparnasse.

"Archaeology has turned the spotlight of public information upon the virile art that

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flourished in Mexico from unknown antiquity —art produced on this continent where less than two centuries ago the United States happened to take root. Americans may be the children of all races, but we belong to this soil and its destiny involves our own. The modern Mexican occupies an identical relation to the same soil. This elemental bond, perhaps, has given the artists of Mexico a sense of being at home in our country and, to the artists from the United States, the beneficent feeling of coming at last into a long withheld heritage when they journey to the ancient cities of the Maya and the Aztec.

"Orozco's first mural in the United States was the "Prometheus" fresco at Pomona College, Claremont, California (1930). It was followed in 1931 by the frescoes in the New School for Social Research in New York. As this book goes to press, he is engaged in a mural project for the Baker Library at Dartmouth College. Regarding Orozco's commission for these frescoes, Dr. Stacy May, Professor of Economics at Dartmouth, writes in comment: 'Orozco's work has many of the qualities that we like to associate with the College. It is completely masculine. It is forthright and unmannered and contemporary. It is democratic and deeply concerned with social values. It would be ridiculous, certainly, for us to claim kinship with this Mexican painter in a parochial sense, but to the larger plane of American life Orozco is as authochthonous as New Hampshire granite, or the Mississippi River, or Samson Occom himself. To the latter worthy the art of José Clemente

OROZCO. Mural, Palacio de Bellas Artes, Mexico City.

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Orozco would have been far more intelligible than any of the works that have come out of Concord. It is important, too, that Orozco's painting is sufficiently abstract and sufficiently universal in theme to give promise of wearing well over the years to come.'

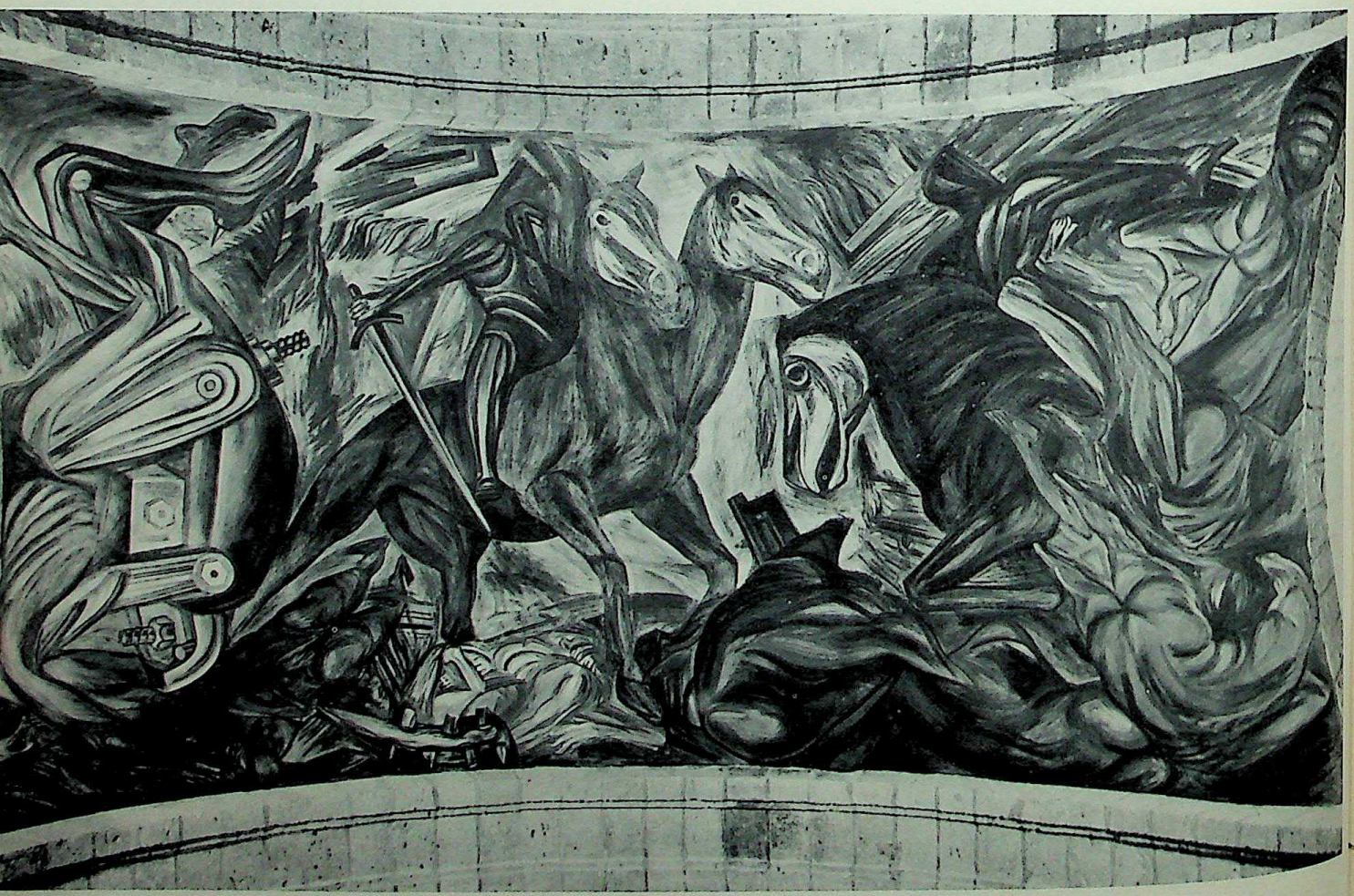
"Orozco's first recorded youthful ambition was 'to bring one grain of sand to the future monument of Mexican art.'

"Beyond national boundaries, on that larger plane of American life, he now helps in the building of another monument.

"Who can foresee across what distant frontiers the vitality of his art may yet lead?"

Orozco returned to Mexico in 1934, and, as a result of his triumphs in the United States, was honored in his own country and was soon at work on a mural, "Catharsis," on the third floor of the transformed Palace of Fine Arts. This masterpiece depicts a seething inferno wherein man, exploited and brutalized, is lost to all sense of human dignity and becomes the slave of lust and greed.

In the summer of 1939 he was called to his native State of Jalisco by Governor Everado Topete to decorate the assembly hall of the University of Guadalajara. The theme developed on the enormous surface of the cupola, some 125 feet above the floor level, is Man in his four aspects—the Worker, the Educator, the Creative Thinker and the Rebel. About Orozco's decoration of this dome Professor José Pijoan, scholarly Catalan critic, observed: "The four stand above the level of discussion. Nothing disturbs them except their own eagerness to find truth and beauty."



OROZCO. Detail, mural, Hospicio Cabañas Orphanage, Guadalajara.

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OROZCO. "Man of Fire," detail from fresco in cupola, Hospicio Cabañas Orphanage, Guadalajara.

Orozco next decorated the imposing stairway of the Palace of Government in Guadalajara. The feature of this work was a heroic portrait of Padre Miguel Hidalgo, Father of Mexican Independence, showing him at the moment he decided to set into motion, at frightful cost, the century-long struggle for freedom. On one of the lateral walls the artist has depicted the Political Circus, with Mussolini, as the chief performing clown, balancing the swastika and hammer and sickle.

During 1939 Orozco completed the major work of his career, the decoration of the vast wall space and dome in the old chapel of the Hospicio Cabañas, a home for orphaned children and the aged. In the dome frescoes, known as "The Man of Fire," Orozco has represented human evolution across the geological epochs. On the walls he has painted a majestic array of kings, churchmen, militarists, men of learning and machine-equipped exploiters of humanity, each playing a part in the saga of not only Mexican but Universal history. All elements are integrated in color harmonies of multitoned gray and in striking co-ordination of design and adaptation to the architectural setting.

In 1940 Orozco undertook the decoration of the Gabiño Ortiz Library at Jiquilpan, Michoacán, at the invitation of then-President Lazaro Cárdenas. The lateral walls depict cruel episodes of the Revolution associated with the place. The figures of men and horses, monumentally drawn, are among Orozco's purest linear achievements. This work was interrupted by an invitation from the Museum

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OROZCO. Detail of fresco, Hospicio Cabañas Orphanage, Guadalajara.

of Modern Art in New York, where he painted a fresco in six movable panels interpreting the menace of the dive bomber, a bit of prophecy soon realized in the bombing of world capitals.

The decoration of the main floor in the new building of the Mexican Supreme Court followed, toward the end of 1940. Above the grand stairway of this building Orozco painted a fresco titled "The Social Movement of Labor." In 1944 he decorated the choir-loft vaults in the ex-chapel of the Hospital of Jesús Nazareno, in Mexico City, with an ideologically profound and courageous interpretation of "The New Apocalypse."

Between 1943 and 1948 Orozco held six exhibitions of his mural studies and color sketches. A work shown in the first exhibition, titled "Death and Resurrection," was chosen to represent the painter at the Venice Biennial of 1948. His final exhibition in this series contained a devastating evaluation of the clergy, as did two of his last murals—"The Great Mexican Revolutionary Legislation," in the Palace of Government at Guadalajara, and the

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Last photograph of Orozco, Semo, Mexico.

"Historical Allegory of the Reform," with its superb portrait of Benito Juárez, at Chapultepec Palace.

His chief semiabstract work was the huge mural, executed in the new plastic materials and covering an area of 340 square meters, that he painted on the seventy-eight-foot parabolic wall of the open-air theatre of the National School for Teachers in Mexico City. In 1949 Orozco decorated the walls of the principal entrance of the same building with four panels titled "Defeat and Death of Ignorance."

Among his notable portraits of this period was one of the Catholic Archbishop of Mexico, Sr. Dr. Luis María Martínez.

On September 9, 1949, shortly after beginning a mural "Primavera" on the garden walls of Edificio Multifamiliar, Orozco died—at the height of his creative powers and during the time his critical faculties, based on his passion for truth, were functioning most effectively. His death, publicly mourned, was an irreparable loss to Mexico and to contemporary art.

The National Congress decreed that his body should rest forever in the Rotunda de los Hombres Ilustres in the civil cemetery of the capital, the tribute with which Mexico honors her greatest men. In 1951 his studio in Guadalajara was converted into a museum for his works, and his brushes, easel, paints and other working materials can be seen in the precise order in which he arranged them.

In a monograph written on Orozco, the Guatemalan poet Luis Cardoza y Aragon says: "His art possesses the dignity of his life; it is built not on motives of today, but on those of eternity."

Orozco was survived by his widow, Sra. Margarita Valladares de Orozco, by a daughter, Lucretia Eugenia, and by two sons, Clemente, Jr., and Alfredo.

The following appraisal of Orozco's meaning for history comes from Jean Charlot, the fellow artist perhaps best qualified to appreciate his work and character: "Every valid artist lives ahead of his era, connives with and enriches those not yet born. Pitted against contemporary taste, he remains alive when his epoch dies. The artist of today, terrified of the spirit, remains bogged in the letter. Cubism dictates his output, clamps onto art an inflexible pillory. Lone rebel, Orozco maintains the supremacy of the spirit, unafraid of describing facts and raising issues."

Death mask of Orozco.

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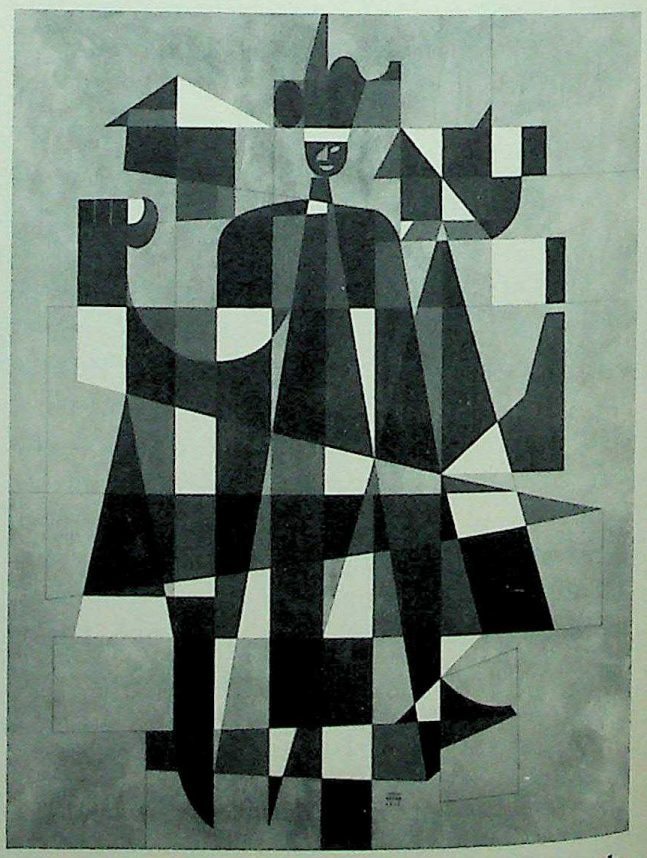
CARLOS MÉRIDA

A creator of striking originality, Carlos Mérida occupies an anomalous position in contemporary Mexican art. The Guatemalan-born pioneer of Mexico's Renaissance first gained recognition in his adopted land in 1920, when he exhibited his gouache and water-color paintings in the Mexican capital and established his reputation as a lyrical painter of the Central American tropics. This event, one of the earliest and most important to follow the establishment of a stable revolutionary government, proved to be one of the main precursors of the national quest for an indigenous aesthetic heritage.

Shunning all concessions to the tourist's concept of the "picturesque," Mérida projected valid patterns of native life. Moreover, he achieved his luminous effects without resorting to the time-honored *chiaroscuro*. He not only dispensed with the representation of sunlight and its dramatic play of contrasting values but, employing the single means of flat color, succeeded in endowing his brilliant landscapes and engaging figures with space, weight and volume. His technique, devoid of linear perspective and modeling, recalls the religiously inspired frescoes that adorn the ancient temples of his Mayan ancestors. Yet Mérida does not remotely suggest the "primitive." On the contrary, his scrupulous elimination of the nonessential and his ability to make the most simplified statement without sacrificing sensuous appeal or atmospheric nuance long ago revealed him as a highly sophisticated contributor to *avant garde* art in the New World.

This sensitive foreign artist, whom Mexico, without reserve, has accepted as her own, was born in Quezaltenango, Guatemala in 1893. However, Mérida's aesthetic functioning in Mexico is entirely logical, for he is a Quiche, a descendant of the same Mayan race that, in pre-Hispanic times, recognized no political division between Guatemala and southeastern Mexico.

When he was seventeen Mérida went to Paris, where he studied for four years in association with Picasso, Modigliani and other leaders of the Parisian School. He then traveled through France, Spain, Belgium and Holland, returning in 1914 to Guatemala, where he initiated a pro-Indian art movement in as-



MÉRIDA. "The Young King" (casein on parchment).

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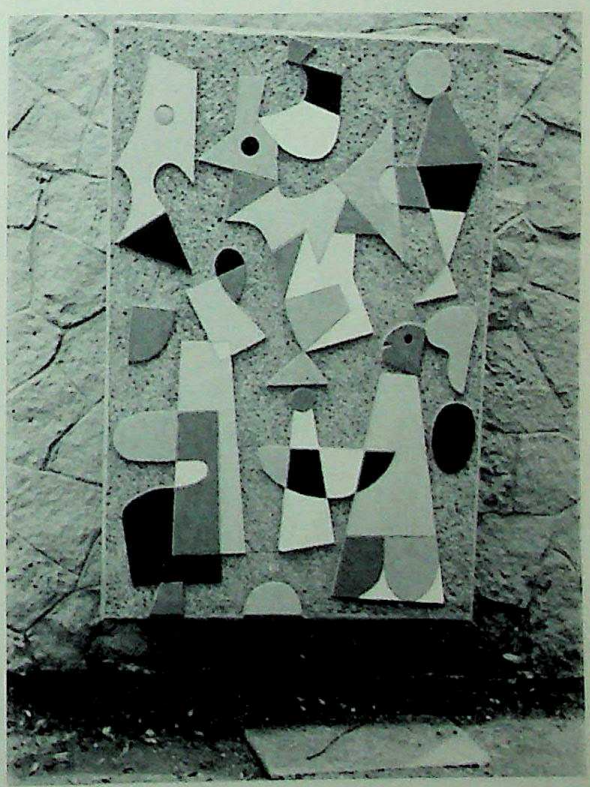
MÉRIDA. "Profiles," oil.

sociation with the sculptor Yela Gunther. Finding little enthusiasm in his native land for his idea of basing modern works on pre-Columbian aesthetics, he came to Mexico in 1919 and, as a result of his first exhibition in the Academy of Fine Arts, gained a responsive public. Among his admirers was Diego Rivera, who returned from Paris in 1922 and enlisted Mérida's technical knowledge and fine sense of design in the execution of his first mural in the National Preparatory School, a project in which Jean Charlot and Xavier Guerrero also assisted. Mérida painted his own first mural on the walls of the children's library of the Ministry of Education.

His first New York exhibition was held at the Valentin-Dudensing Gallery as that celebrated Manhattan establishment's initial event in 1926. Returning from a second visit to Paris, Mérida exhibited at the Delphic Studios in 1929, showing the paintings and striking colored lithographs of the delightful series "Images of Guatemala." This exhibit added to his fame and to his popularity with North American collectors, especially when his works were circulated over the nation and shown in several leading museums.

During his Paris sojourn, Mérida was won over to abstract painting, and the influence has persisted in his work to the present time.

The Italian review *Spazio,* organ of the most orthodox European abstractionists, has characterized Mérida as the only true Mexican abstractionist. In defense of his abstractions the painter recently declared: "Abstract art is a fundamental phenomenon, basic in the plastic creation and not, as has been supposed, 'one more ism.' The field is much more ample and more diverse than is generally believed. Abstraction has existed from the moment in which there was a transmutation of plastic and therefore poetic values. Cézanne, synthesizing the component parts of his pictures, did nothing more than a work of abstraction,



MÉRIDA. Exterior mural (concrete block, colored vinylite) in the nursery of the *multifamiliar* Presidente Juárez.

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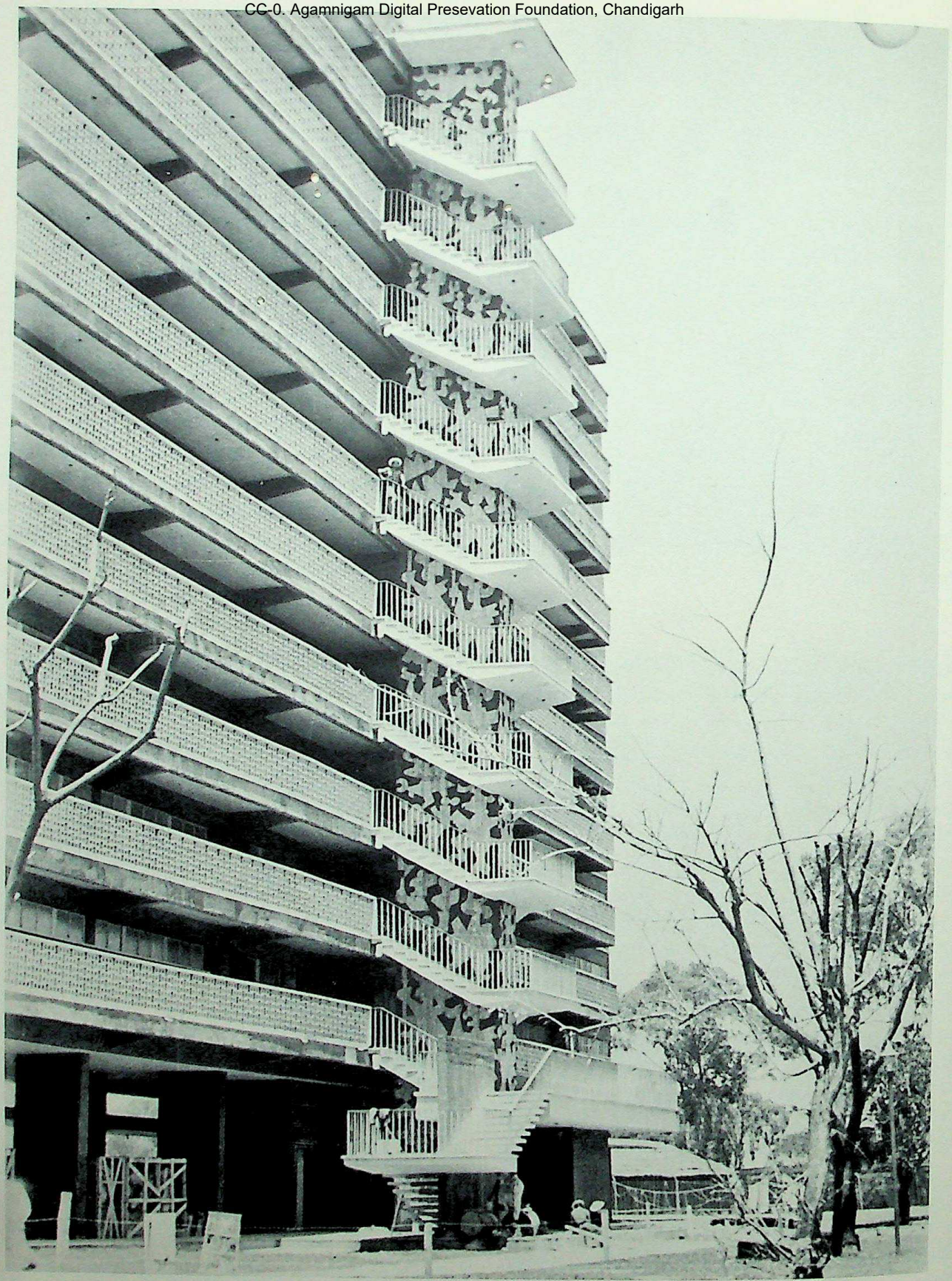

MÉRIDA. Stairway of the *multifamiliar* "Presidente Juárez," concrete and colored vinylite.

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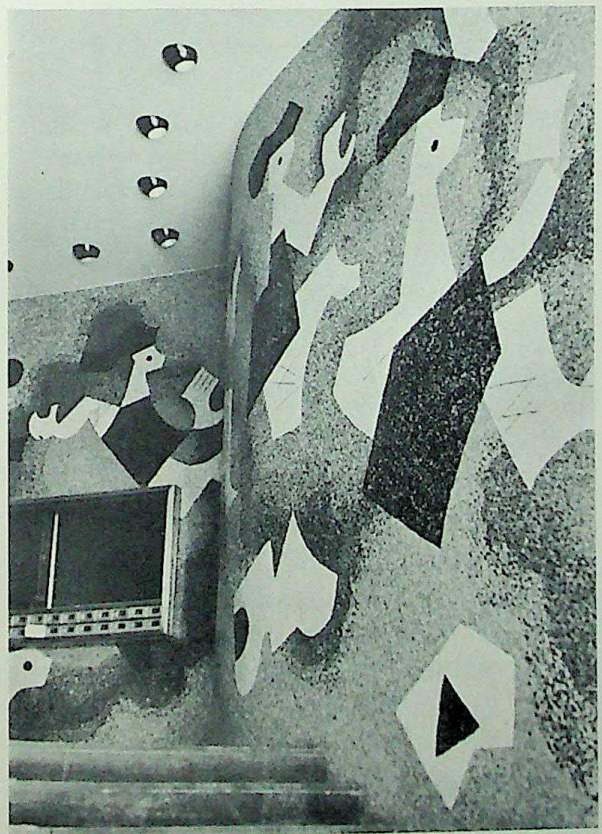
reducing the organic elements to coherent parts of a whole. Can we consider Cézanne a decadent formalist? In the long ago, he vigorously gave the reply!"

With the object of demonstrating the bond between pre-Hispanic art and Mérida's work, an exhibition of his paintings, together with some ancient examples, was held at the Galería Mont-Orendain de Mexico in 1947. In that year also, Mérida illustrated Frances Toor's *A Treasury of Mexican Folkways* with more than a hundred drawings.

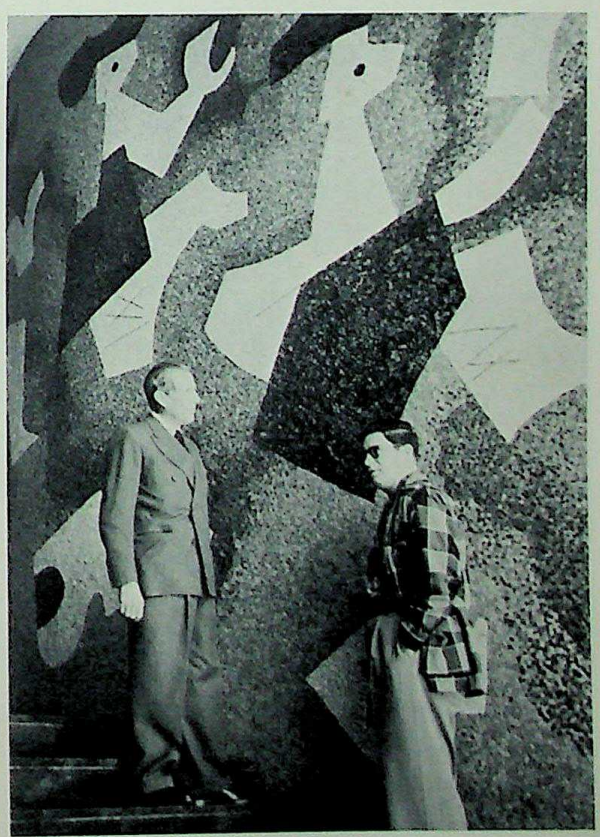
In recent years the artist has occupied himself with integrating painting and contemporary architecture. He has collaborated closely with the architects who designed and built the Central *multifamiliar* "Benito Juárez" in the Mexican capital. His archaelogically inspired murals there, executed in colors with a silicon base, were completed in late 1952. While purely decorative, this work conveys a national longing and reveals the formal or stylized influence of the Maya, mother culture of the American continent.

The discovery of the Bonampak frescoes (A.D. 317-987) revived Mérida's interest in painting, after world conditions had forced his sensitive nature to seek release in music from his preoccupation with humanity's fate. Following the discovery of these remarkable ritual paintings, Mérida began to utilize in his oils, the means used by the ancient Mayan muralists for achieving dimension—the superimposition of three values.

One of the developments of Mérida's multifaceted talent is his skill in the handling of industrial plastics and in opening "space" in polychromed bas-relief. Among the murals executed as an "integration of the arts," in which painting and sculpture are made part of the



MÉRIDA. Venetian mosaic mural at the entrance to the *edificio* Reaseguras Alianza.



MÉRIDA and his helper Soto before Mérida's Venetian mosaic mural in the *edificio* Reaseguras Alianza in Mexico City.

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architectural ensemble, is a decoration on an interior wall in the home of Sra. Elena Hoyos de Martínez, mother of architect Homero Martínez and painter Ricardo Martínez, in San Angel, a suburb of the Mexican capital.

In 1956 Mérida returned to his native Guatemala to decorate the new Municipal Palace in the national capital. In a mosaic covering an area of 1,300 square feet, he interpreted the Third Race, the *mestizo,* which represents a successful blending of Mayan and Spanish strains. During 1958 he decorated the exterior of the Instituto Guatemalteco de Seguridad Social, also in mosaic. This work, embracing 650 square feet, deals with various aspects of the collective welfare of the country.

Back in Mexico after a world tour that occupied an entire year, the indefatigable artist is again engaged in charting new plastic roads in his homey, old-fashioned studio at Alvaro Obregón 159. An exhibition in 1960, following an earlier one at the Galería de Arte Mexicano, showed his experiments with new media, which he plans to use in future mural commissions. Despite his graying hair, he presents a youthful figure and an attitude of undiminished enthusiasm. We found him as alert, as agile of movement and as sensitive of personality as we did in those Delphic Studios days of the early thirties.

RAMÓN ALVA DE LA CANAL

A veteran of Revolución Sociál who in 1914, with Orozco, Siqueiros and other Mexican painters, accompanied Dr. Atl's brigade of artists to Orizaba with the Obregón forces, Ramón Alva de la Canal was one of the initiators of the contemporary mural movement. In 1922 he became an active member of the recently organized Sindicato and painted what is recognized as the first *bueno fresco* in twentieth-century Mexico. The work, executed in the stairwell at the entrance to the main patio of the National Preparatory School, opposite a wall painted by Fermín Revueltas, depicts the landing of the Spaniards and the planting of the Cross in the New World. While conforming to the so-called Mexican School style created at that time by Rivera, his work was rich in personal nuance.

The promising career of Revueltas was cut short by death in 1935. Born in Santiago Papasquiaro, State of Durango in 1903, Revueltas, while still very young, was one of the founders of the contemporary Mexican school and among the original members of the Sindicato. His early art training was received in Chicago where he lived until 1919. In 1921 he was director of the open-air school at Villa de Guadalupe. His encaustic mural in the Preparatory School patio, inspired by the traditional theme of the Virgin of Guadalupe, reveals the simplified forms of the trend to neo-Classicism identified with Rivera. Other mural works by Revueltas in the Mexican capital include frescoes executed in 1932 in the El Nacionál building and a large panel painted the following year in the Banco Hitotecario. His distinguished color sense is displayed in numerous canvases, which, for the most part, interpret Nature in her lush, tropical moods in southeastern Mexico.

Another gifted painter, inextricably associated with the real pioneers at the dawn of contemporary Mexican muralism, and who, like Revueltas, died prematurely, is Amado de la Cueva. In 1922 he worked with Rivera in the decoration of the second patio of the Ministry of Public Education. His two fresco panels on the folkloric theme "La Danza de Los Santiagos y el Torito" (the dance of the little bull) executed in 1923, harmonize with the

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ALVA DE LA CANAL. Detail of encaustic mural, Naval Recreation Center, Mexico City.

adjacent Rivera group "The Market." In 1925, a year before his death, Amado de la Cueva completed other mural decorations at the University of Guadalajara.

Born in Tacubaya, D.F. in 1898, in the old family mansion that is still his residence, Alva de la Canal began his art studies in the San Carlos Academy and pursued them later in the open-air schools of Santa Anita and Chilaltistac. For several years he worked as a cultural missionary for the Ministry of Education, but in 1937 he returned to muralism to undertake a major project. This was "The Life of Morelos," to be portrayed in a series of panels for the interior of the gigantic statue honoring the Independence hero, on the island of Janitzio in Lake Pátzcuaro. In a five-year period Alva de la Canal painted 200 canvases for installation in the towering monument, which is larger than the Statue of Liberty in New York Harbor.

In 1946 General Heriberto Jara commis-

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ALVA DE LA CANAL. Detail, encaustic mural, Naval Recreation Center, Mexico City.

ALVA DE LA CANAL. Encaustic murals, Naval Recreation Center, Mexico City.

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sioned him to execute, in encaustic, a series of murals on the theme "War and Peace" in the Naval Station's *taller* and recreation center, situated in the Lomas Sotelo in Mexico City. Each of the four panels measures about 38¼ feet in length and 14½ feet in height. On the right the artist has depicted the chaos and destruction of war; on the left the joyous celebration of victory. On the rear wall he has interpreted human sorrow as the result of war, and on the front wall he portrays the blessings enjoyed by man in a peaceful world.

While directing the School of Plastic Arts at Jalapa, Veracruz, Alva de la Canal continues his own artistic creation as an easel painter and as a muralist. In November, 1960 he held a successful retrospective exhibition at the Art Collectors' Gallery in Mexico City.

JEAN CHARLOT

In January, 1934, on the occasion of Jean Charlot's first one-man exhibition in New York, Frank Crowninshield, editor of *Vanity Fair* and one of the pioneer collectors of Mexican art, noted in the catalogue of the John Levy Galleries:

"Jean Charlot is a poet, writer, archaeologist, portraitist, painter and designer of heroic murals. In his thirty-four years, he has traveled widely, illustrated books, studied the origins of Mayan culture and done distinguished work in lithography and water color. Certainly his great murals in Mexico—so exciting in content and so important in theme—give color to the contention that he was born for fresco."

Mr. Crowninshield goes on to say, however, that in 1925, when Charlot was twenty-six, "he turned his back on damp plaster and devoted himself to easel painting." Fortunately, Charlot's abandonment of the venerable fresco medium—to the rediscovery and epoch-making use of which he has so vitally contributed in the contemporary Mexican mural movement—was only temporary. In the intervening years Charlot, who is now director of the Art Department at the University of Hawaii, has decorated the walls of public buildings in far corners of the world.

Occupying a unique position in Mexico's post-Revolution cultural progress, the gifted artist-author, born in Paris in 1898, came to Mexico in 1921, following service first as a lieutenant in the French Artillery and then with the French Army of Occupation in Germany after the war. Earlier he had studied at the Beaux Arts in Paris. While interrupting his formal studies, Charlot's military experience proved to be a major influence in shaping his

CHARLOT. "Dos Mujeres," study.

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CHARLOT. "Malinches," oil.

future career as a painter. While in Germany he fell under the spell of the sixteenth-century colorist Matthias Grünewald. The inspiration of the German master is to be seen in much of Charlot's later religious painting, notably his series "Via Crucis," described by Fr. M. A. Couturier, O.P., as "a plastic akin to that of the Breton calvaries, through which the artist simply states what he is, what he loves and what he believes."

Charlot's inherited interest in archaeology was another determining factor in his artistic development. His childhood had been passed amid the relics of vanished civilizations—ancient Greek vases and old Mexican codices with their vivid pictographs. His maternal uncle Goupil had donated one of the first groups of Mayan sculpture and ceramics to the Trocadero and collections of pre-Columbian manuscripts to the Bibliothèque Nationale.

Mexico—with its magnificent ancient monuments, eloquent vestiges of enigmatic cultural origins, the land where his own ancestors had emigrated as early as 1820—beckoned as the *ultima Thule* of his youthful dreams. His arrival in Mexico at the age of twenty-three coincided with the launching of the revolutionary mural movement under the patronage of José Vasconcelos. Following a season of work in the open-air atelier of Alfredo Ramos Martínez, he became an assistant to Diego Rivera, but soon was given wall space of his own under the main stairway of the National Preparatory School, formerly

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the old Colegio San Ildefonso. Here, in the first public building to be decorated as part of the cultural program of President Alvaro Obregón's liberal government, he painted, in true fresco, "The Fall of Tenochtitlán." The work, commissioned by Vicente Lombardo Toledano, director of the Preparatory School and future labor leader, was initiated in May, 1922 and completed by the end of the same year. Walls of the venerable building were also assigned to other young men—Revueltas, Fernando Leal and Francisco Cahero. Arriving from Europe in September, Siqueiros and Amado de la Cueva began painting in encaustic above a stairway ramp, but, as the experiment in the little cubicle at the rear of the school auditorium progressed, the entire group adopted the fresco medium.

Later Charlot helped decorate the walls of the second court in the new Ministry of Education building, working there with de la Cueva and Xavier Guerrero in what he describes as a "first try at a communal project."

As art editor of the periodical *Mexican Folkways,* Charlot called world attention to the indigenous and popular motifs of Mexico's rich cultural heritage. With tireless energy, natural enthusiasm and his rare intellectual equipment, the French-born painter soon became a leading figure in a nation's discovery of itself.

No one has better described the ideologic and plastic considerations that entered into the transference of ancient art forms to Mexico's contemporary, dynamic creation than Charlot himself when, reminiscently, he wrote in the *Saturday Review of Literature,* in September, 1951:

"Each school of art may be summed up in a single aesthetic canon. For example, the Greek ideal type, be it a bronze athlete or a marble Venus, flexes his muscles or exhibits her curves as a king set within a vacuum. The Mexican Indian prefers to take his stand in Nature with a kind of artless camouflage, flesh color melting into the color of earth; the Greek theatrical gesture gives way here to less exposed ones, bending and squatting. In consequence, sometime throughout the years 1920-25 an ideal Mexican type was evolved that has already become a classical art form, as shorn of paraphernalia as was the Greek nude man. Intent on duplicating Indian ways, the muralist found to his delight that to paint better this brown man clad in white, all that was needed was a severely limited palette of lime-resistant pigments, all earth colors that are the very nuances of earth, and dust, and straw, and dark flesh. Aesthetic considerations blended with technical ones, led to the rebirth on a large scale of true fresco."

Charlot's characteristic palette favors color rooted in pale earth-greens, dull blues, citron yellow and grays of true fresco. His personal approach to the creation of "an ideal Mexican type" has been analyzed by Lincoln Kirstein, his friend and ardent admirer, as follows:

"Here is an excellent example of molding influences sublimated, digested and recreated. The Aztec profiles, the calligraphy of ancient Mexican codices is obvious *not* as echo, but as revivification."

During 1928 and 1929, Charlot sketched and painted in Yucatán with the Carnegie Institution expedition. The result was the profusely illustrated *The Temple of the Warriors,* in two volumes. It was the editing of this monumental work that occasioned his first visit to New York, where he quickly gained a large and enthusiastic following.

Although we had known Charlot and enjoyed the friendship of his art-conscious mother in Mexico during the Renaissance days, it was not until 1929, when he became instructor of mural painting at the Art Students League of New York, that we fully appreciated his true intellectual and spiritual stature. A frequent visitor to our "Ashram" studio apartment, where Orozco often worked and kept his paintings on view, we were privileged to sit in on profound discussions of aesthetic, social and political problems be-

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tween the two great painters, who were intimate and devoted friends.

Charlot was one of the organizers of Orozco's comprehensive retrospective show at the Art Students League in 1929. His painstaking efforts in the arrangement and hanging of the huge collection, his untiring zeal in creating interest in the event and his numerous lectures on the significance of Orozco's art during the exhibition, all attested to his generous spirit and to his capacity for loyal camaraderie.

At that time the young Charlot might have been the ideal model for a composite portrait of the "archetypal aesthete." Delicate-featured and of slender build, reticent but self-assured in manner, with a voice that was low-keyed yet richly modulated, he seemed to dominate even the noisiest group with a certain mystic authority. His quiet command of situations could be traced, perhaps, to his blue eyes, which looked out through their bifocals with an expression that ceaselessly questioned hypocrisy and with a penetration that disturbed fatuous complacency. He shared this quality, on a less pronounced scale, with Orozco, of whom the philosopher Claude Bragdon once said, "There is nothing quite so eloquent as Orozco's silences."

At various periods Charlot was a member of the faculties of Smith College, Black Mountain College and the universities of Iowa and New Jersey, and by 1936, when he taught at the Florence Cane School of Art at Rockefeller Center he was recognized as an important

CHARLOT. Head of Cortez, detail from Mexican mural, Journalism Building, University of Georgia, Athens, Ga.

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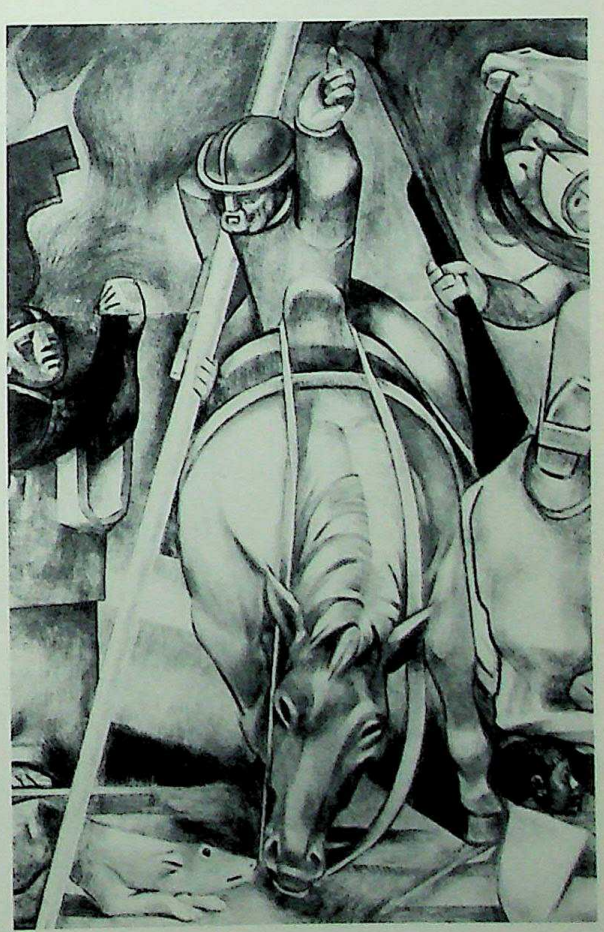
CHARLOT. Fresco detail, Fine Arts Building, Athens, Ga.

international art figure. His exhibition of religious paintings, depicting episodes in the life of Christ and the stations of the Cross, was held at the Bonestell Galleries in 1940.

Soon after, in that same year, Charlot carried the message of painted walls into the Deep South, when he taught mural techniques at the University of Georgia. He made what was then the world's largest pencil sketch, in preparation for the 700-square-foot fresco in the School of Journalism building, executed between 1943 and 1944 with the assistance of his students. He described this work as "a contribution in emphasizing communal painting." The mural, financed jointly by the *Atlanta Journal* and the University of Georgia, was hailed as a milestone in local art appreciation. The official spokesman for an Atlanta civic body said of it:

"The function of this mural is not only to decorate the hallway of the commerce and journalism building. It also provides Charlot's advanced students with an opportunity to get practical fresco experience. For the student body at large, it provides education of a sort too often neglected—to see how a work of art is actually created."

Earlier (1941-42) Charlot decorated the Fine Arts building at Athens, Georgia, working at the same time on murals in the McDonough Post Office of that city. In his diary entry of August 25, 1941, the artist records his arrival in Georgia as follows: "I had brushed murals for a government once before, but Mexican officials in the 1920's still disported a revolution-bred informality. In contrast, notwithstanding the genuine affability of



CHARLOT. Fresco detail, "Cortez lands in Mexico," Journalism Building, University of Georgia, Athens, Ga.

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CHARLOT. "Tortillera," detail from Mexican mural, University of Georgia, Athens, Ga.

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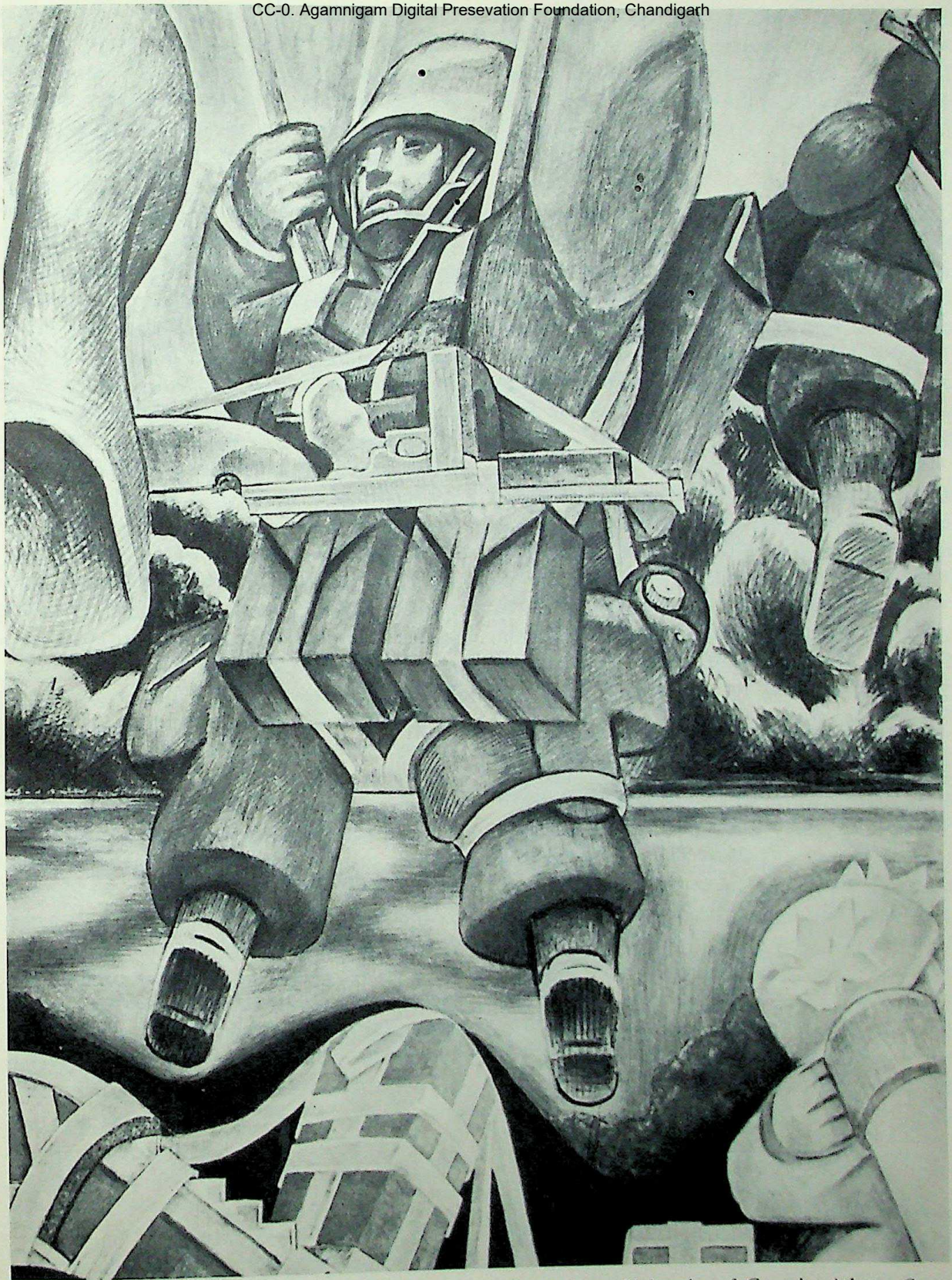

CHARLOT. Fresco detail, "The Paratrooper," Journalism Building, University of Georgia, Athens, Ga.

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its dispensers, Washington intricacy bred unease. The contract entered into that day referred to 'The Artist' with quote, unquote and a capital A, a fancy dress for a fact long taken for granted, while the future mural was tagged 'WAI pb 3661,' which made it all the harder to envision."

In 1948 Charlot organized a group project at the Colorado Springs Fine Arts School, which he directed. Here he put his students to work on a gigantic fresco titled "The Fall of Jericho."

Between these two fruitful teaching assignments, he studied and painted while traveling as the 1945 recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship.

Although early military service interfered with Charlot's formal education, the academic honors he has received from institutions of higher learning at which he has taught, and from the scholarly societies to which he belongs, constitute an impressive list. He has served as a faculty member at twelve universities, and he has been a Ryerson lecturer at Yale and at Columbia and a director of the College Art Association.

Since 1951 Charlot has been muralist and professor of art at the University of Hawaii. With his attractive wife Zormah and their five children, he enjoys an active and harmonious life whose dual mainsprings are love and work, both finding creative expression in painting, writing and teaching. Those who have visited him in his colorful Honolulu home report that he is the happiest of men, deriving, he explains, his "artistic motivation from a concern with religion as a force, and art"—which he considers as one of the few essentials of human nature—"as a means."

Independently of his painting, Charlot has won renown for his numerous book illustrations—many of them for children—as well as for his brilliant critiques and essays on aesthetic themes. He is an acknowledged master of the various techniques of the graphic arts. As a portrait painter, he defines character with a remarkable economy of line, whatever the medium. Notable examples of his work in this field include his large oil portrait of Paul Claudel, the ink drawing of Siqueiros and the crayon study of the famed Father Damien of the Molokai leper colony.

His works have been acquired by the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Phillips Gallery, the Museum of Modern Art in New York, the Uffizi and many other museums and private collections in the United States, Europe and Latin America.

His writings are rich in succinct poetic definitions of aesthetic function, which are widely quoted; among them is, "The artist completes in illusion what the architect has begun in truth."

His better known books, composed of collected essays, include *Art from the Mayas to Disney,* and *Art Making from Mexico to China.*

Not the least of Charlot's contributions to contemporary art have been made in his effective role of international cultural liaison officer. Through the promotion of wider sympathies and deepened understanding among peoples, he has rendered vital service to Mexico, France and the United States, thus fulfilling art's noblest function. But the total contribution toward the enrichment of life that Charlot has made to date and that he is capable of making is still uncalculated.

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DIEGO RIVERA

Admittedly the most picturesque as well as the most renowned figure of the contemporary Mexican art movement, Diego Rivera was born in the City of Guanajuato in 1886. A few years later his family moved to the Mexican capital and, in 1896, because of his marked artistic leanings, entered him in the San Carlos Academy, before he was ten years of age. Studying with the maestros Santiago Rebull, José Salomé Pina and Felix Parra, and under the great Velasco, he remained there until 1902, completing the usual academic studies and demonstrating, in his formal drawings, his ability as a draughtsman.

On the death of Rebull in 1902, Fabres succeeded as Rector of the Academy and imposed a regime of strict adherence to the most abject and detailed realism, in the form of minute reproduction of the external form of objects. At this time (1903) Rivera was sixteen years of age. Even then his rebellious spirit refused to tolerate the Academy's unimaginative methods, and he decided to work independently.

His first exhibition, held in Veracruz in 1907, so impressed Governor Don Theodoro Dehesa that the young artist was rewarded with a scholarship for study in Europe. He went to Spain, where he enrolled at the San Fernando Academy and worked in the studio of the painter Eduardo Chicarro, a follower of the Spanish Realist School. He traveled through Spain, Belgium, Holland, France and England and gradually, breaking with his classicist beginnings, exhibited with the Independents of Paris.

While his frequent visits to Spain left the imprint of Zuloaga and Zubiarre, traces of Cubism began to appear in his aesthetic style. For several years, until 1917, Rivera was an ardent devotee of Cubism, with an occasional suggestion of Mexican memories in the themes of his paintings, "Zapatista Landscape" being the best known of this group. But from 1907 on, the influence of Gauguin, Renoir and Cézanne became more evident in his work.

In 1920 Rivera met David Alfaro Siqueiros in Paris, and the two Mexican artists, with a background of youthful political and aesthetic rebellion, discussed the necessity for creating in their native land a national popular art movement that would completely transform the existing outlook of the Mexican artist. With the encouragement of President Alvaro Obregón and Ing. Alberto J. Pani, the Minister of Foreign Relations, they returned to

MONTENEGRO. Early portrait of Rivera, oil.

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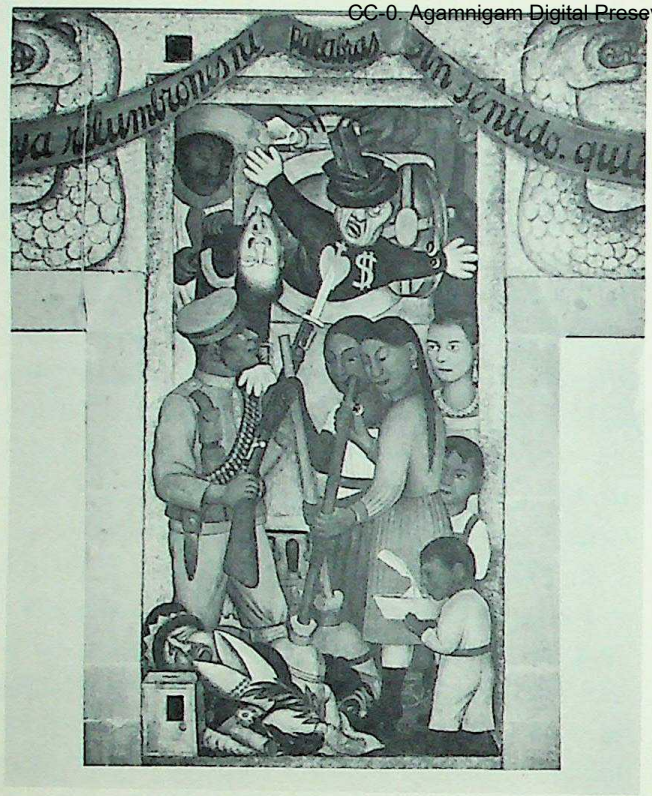
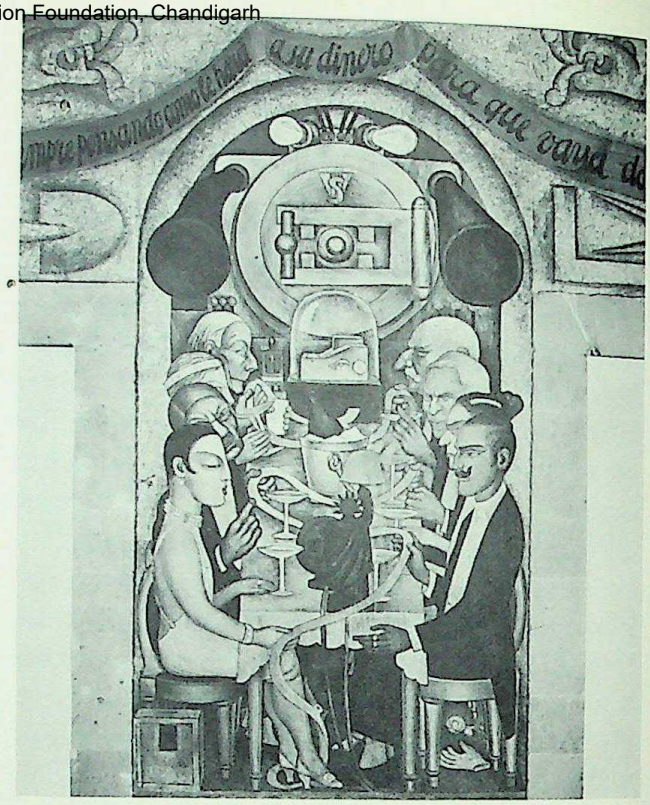


RIVERA. "Words Without Feeling," fresco, Ministry of Public Education.



RIVERA. "The Capitalists," fresco, Ministry of Public Education.

LA TIERRA ES DE TODOS
COMO EL AIRE, EL AGUA Y LA LUZ
Y EL CALOR DEL SOL
Y TIENEN DERECHO A ELLA LOS QUE
LA TRABAJAN CON SUS PROPIAS MANOS
Diego Rivera

RIVERA. A cartoon.

Mexico, where the movement for the decoration of public buildings has been launched by José Vasconcelos.

In 1922 Rivera was allotted the Anfiteatro Bolívar of the National Preparatory School for mural decoration. Here, in encaustic, he painted a large-scale allegorical work titled "The Creation," of which the eminent Mexican art critic Dr. Justino Fernández says: "It is practically a resumé of the history of painting from the Byzantine art to Cézanne. Rivera makes and renews the synthesis in this mural, employing not only the colors but the gold areas, that once again, recall Byzance."

Following a visit to Yucatán and other Mayan regions of the Southeast, Rivera was fully impressed with the plastic possibilities of the native material. In this wholly nationalistic mood he undertook the decoration of the new building of the Ministry of Education, painting, in fresco, the walls of the first two patios with social and political themes, specifically related to the gains and hopes of Revolución

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RIVERA. "The Teacher," fresco, Ministry of Public Education.

RIVERA. "Corrido of the Mexican Revolution," fresco, Ministry of Public Education.

Social. The ground floor was devoted to Labor, the first floor to Science and the second to the Arts. In the second patio the artist dealt with three great themes—the Partition of the Lands, or *ejidos;* the celebration of May first, Labor Day; and a Market. Between the panels were decorative motifs illustrating the popular *corridos,* songs of the Revolution and the symbolic emblems of the Mexican states.

During the progress of this mural, the members of the Syndicate of Mexican Painters and Sculptors worked collectively on the perfection of the fresco technique, one that had been lost for centuries. With the experiments, principally those of Xavier Guerrero, José Clemente Orozco and Jean Charlot, the painters recovered and mastered the ancient technique, and, in the course of the two-year period required for the decoration of the Educational Ministry building, Rivera himself developed great skill in the execution of the true fresco of the Italian Renaissance.

One of the most impressive panels of the enormous project appears on the second floor of the second patio, representing a group of Mexican leaders of the Revolution "transfigured by death," notably those of Professor Montaño, Felipe Carrillo Puerto, martyred Governor of Yucatán, and the young Aztec Emperor Cuauhtémoc. In this same building Rivera adorned the principal stairway with a landscape, more or less classical in mood. The work expressed his personal vision of Mexico's vastness, from the shores of the gulf, with its tropical Antillean mood, to the perpetually snow-clad mountains and the elevated tablelands of the Mexican plateau beyond.

One of Rivera's helpers on the Ministry of Education murals, a man who later made very important contributions of his own to contemporary Mexican art, was Emilio Amero, master lithographer and, since 1946, teacher of graphic arts at the University of Oklahoma. Born in the village of Ixlahuana, State of Mexico, Amero worked with Rivera, Mérida, Charlot and Guerrero on the walls of the Na-

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tional Preparatory School and with Rivera on the Public Education building. With Díaz de León, Fernando Leal, Charlot and Ledesma, Amero is recognized as a leader in the movement to revive print-making in Mexico and as a pioneer in color lithography. In 1923, he painted the main-library walls of the Ministry of Education in *fresco secco,* a technique he acquired from Orozco, and the same year he assisted Carlos Mérida in the decoration of the children's library in this same building.

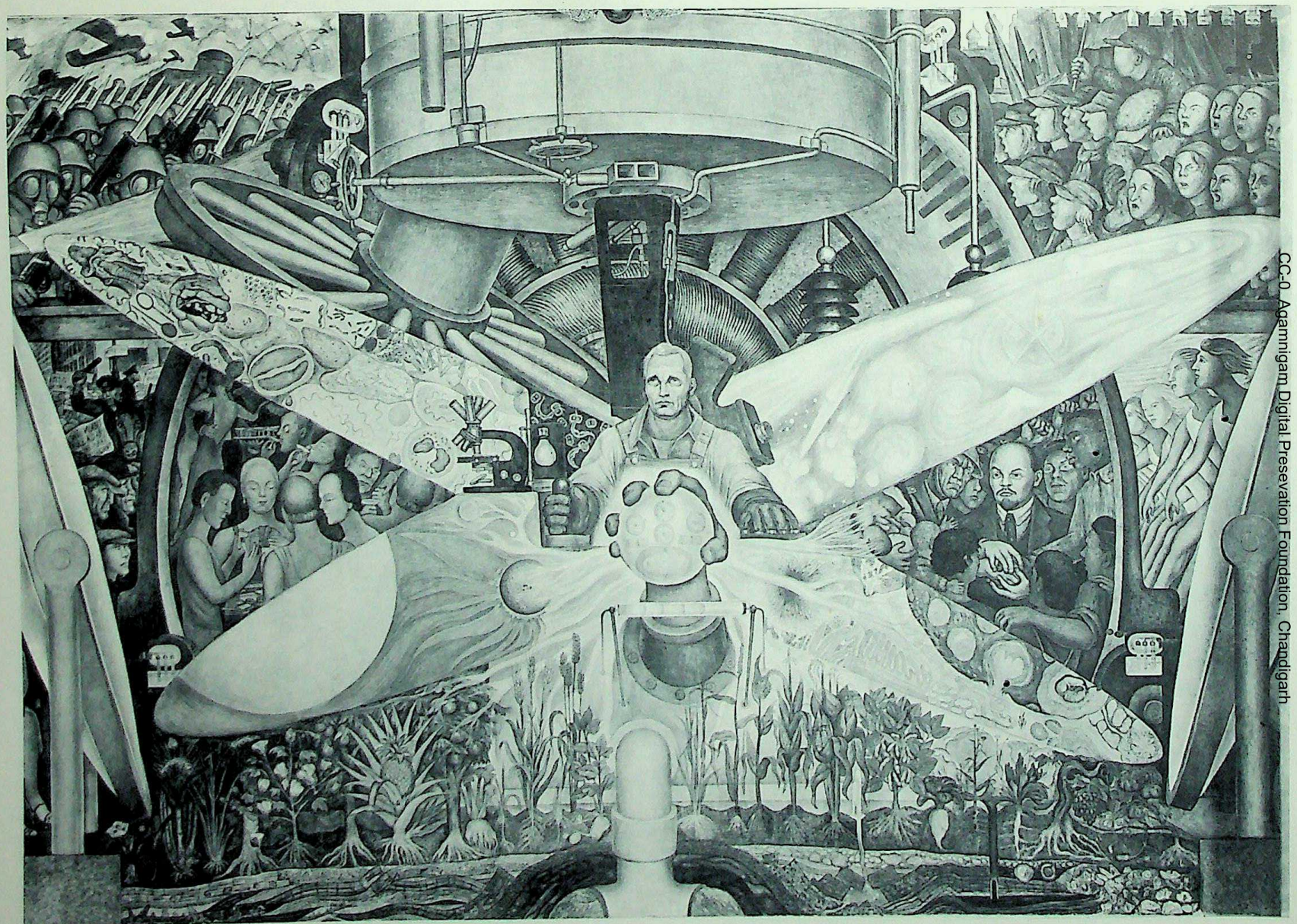
Following several years in New York, where he enjoyed notable success as an illustrator and as a teacher of graphic arts in leading art schools, Amero returned to Mexico to establish a lithographic course at San Carlos, meanwhile experimenting with abstract motion pictures. He has held numerous one-man shows of painting and lithography in Mexico, Havana and in many cities of the United States. His work was first publicly exhibited in New York at our Delphic Studios. In the early thirties Charlot wrote of him: "When Amero stopped painting murals, he began his eventful career as an explorer in many media. Just as others show a versatility in style, he has worked and inquired through the whole gamut of techniques, weighing each, careful of its limitations, yet always ingenious in adapting to original uses. He has worked his way through etchings, lithographs, water colors, oils, photographs, and cinematography. He is an exponent of international expression, delightfully so, and his work is as Mexican as he is, a *sotto voce,* more convincing than many loud barks."

In 1926, with the Ministry of Public Education project still unfinished, Rivera began the decoration of the Salon de Actos in the National School of Agriculture at Chapingo. This work, which is generally regarded by critics as the outstanding mural achievement of his career, was executed in the former chapel of the Hacienda Chapingo, built in the eighteenth century. The artist himself defined the problems and aims of these murals when he stated: "I was compelled to communicate the architectural style of the chapel—Spanish Renaissance—with a genuinely Mexican aesthetic, without its being picturesque or archaeological in mood—and projecting the ideas of flowering and fruitfulness, phenomena that are natural symbols in the development of the life of man, the Producer."

Rivera's synthesis of his grandiose conception concerning Chapingo is seen on the end wall of the choir of the ancient chapel, in the monumental fresco titled "The Elements and the Technical Man." The composition is dominated by a female nude representing the Sleeping Earth, in whose hands is a germinating seed. International critics have hailed this painting as one of the greatest nudes in the entire history of art. Rivera also decorated the stairway of the Agricultural School with variations on themes that appear in the Ministry of Education, but entirely lacking in the magnificence or plastic interest of the chapel frescoes.

Among the many helpers of Rivera on the Chapingo murals during 1926 and 1927, none was perhaps more favorably known for the freshness and lyricism of his original work than Máximo Pacheco. A shepherd on the hills of his ancestral Anahuac during boyhood, he closely observed the forms of nature—the trees, flowers and fruits, the rocks, the birds and animals—all of which were later to ap-

RIVERA. "Dance of the Earth," oil.



RIVERA. Famous controversial fresco showing Lenin *(right)*, Palace of Fine Arts.

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RIVERA. "The Grinder," oil.

pear in his oils and drawings, reminiscent of the engaging primitivism of *le dounier* Rousseau. Pacheco's mural style was acquired as he worked on the scaffold alongside Rivera, or as he ground colors in the master's *taller*.

Between 1927 and 1928 Rivera visited Russia, where he made numerous sketches and painted a collection of water colors included in "Un Album de Moscu." Returning to Mexico, he completed the decoration of the second floor of the Ministry of Education with a panel inspired by the Moscow May Day celebration and titled "La Revolución Mundial," in which appear the artist's late wife (the painter Frida Kahlo) and David Alfaro Siqueiros.

For a brief period in 1929 Rivera served as director of the Academy of San Carlos. His resignation was the result of a struggle with the conservative architects and the capital's private building interests. Both resented his appointing to the School of Architecture Juan O'Gorman, champion of the "new architecture" and the creator of revolutionary codes that broke with the academic traditions of the Díaz period.

In late 1929 he accepted a commission to decorate the loggia of the Palace of Cortés, as a gift to the people of Cuernavaca, from former U.S. Ambassador Dwight W. Morrow, who resided in the town. The palace is one of the few remaining sixteenth-century buildings in Mexico, and today serves as the seat of the city government. The theme of the mural revolves around the contrast between the Spanish Conquerors and the leaders of the liberating movements, Morelos and Zapata. The mural depicts various scenes in the conquest of Cuernavaca and shows the construction of the palace itself by Indians under forced labor. Among the finest panels of this work are two full-figure portraits—one of the liberator Morelos and the other of the agrarian leader Emilio Zapata.

In 1929 and 1930 Rivera decorated the council chamber of the Department of Health with paintings symbolizing Life and Physical Well-being.

Numerous oil and water-color paintings, as well as drawings and lithographs, were produced during this period, hundreds of them reaching important public and private collections of the United States, Europe and Mexico.

Rivera now returned to the already-initiated decoration of the grand staircase in the National Palace and at the end of the year went to San Francisco, where, in 1931, he decorated the stairway of the Luncheon Club of the Stock Exchange with an allegorical painting that interpreted the natural and human resources of the State of California. The same year he painted two other murals in San Francisco—one a decorative panel in the home of Mrs. Stern and the other in the California School of Fine Arts. This same year a comprehensive exhibit of all periods of the painter's work was held in the Museum of Modern Art in New York.

In 1932, he designed costumes and stage sets for Carlos Chávez's ballet *H.P.*, which was directed by Leopold Stokowski and presented in Philadelphia. As Dr. Justino Fernández suggests, this event marked the climax of the career of the painter in the United States, whose "good star had reached its zenith."

In 1932, too, Rivera painted a mural in the patio of the Art Institute of Detroit, a work interpreting the mass-production industries of the

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RIVERA. "Vision of Alameda Central," famous controversial fresco, shown here in four sections. This photograph was taken before the mural was changed to delete the offending *"Dios no existe,"* which can be seen at right center of the first section, on the lower of the two broadsides.

great automobile-manufacturing center of the Americas. One detail, representing Science and depicting the inoculation of an infant, employed the symbols of the Nativity and, due to the protests of orthodox groups, created a public scandal.

But a scandal of even greater proportions developed when, in 1933, Rivera worked on a mural in the lobby of the RCA Building in New York City's Rockefeller Center. Before its completion, this work was destroyed because of the artist's insertion of the head of Lenin among the group of technicians shown in control of the physical and social world—in fact, of the whole universe. Following the sensational controversies evoked by this inci-

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dent, Rivera remained in New York long enough to paint a series of twenty-one movable fresco panels for the New Workers' School, which he called "Portrait of America." The work, interpreting the class struggle and showing the oppression of labor by capitalistic forces, portrays Karl Marx in the act of indicating the road to Social Justice. Upon Rivera's return to Mexico, the mural intended for Rockefeller Center was executed anew in its complete form on the third floor of the Palace of Fine Arts, then under construction in the transformed National Theatre in the heart of the Mexican capital. This work is said to be a synthesis of Rivera's political and social thinking.

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Rivera now returned to an unfinished project, the staircase of the National Palace, where he presented an interpretation of Mexican history from the standpoint of the conflict of two opposing forces—the oppressed and the oppressors. In a general way, the indigenous race represented the former, and the Spanish conquerors and foreign elements the latter. Noteworthy details of this work are the portraits of the Franciscan historian Bernardino de Sahagún, Bishop Quiroga, Mexico's first humanist, and Fray Bartolomé Las Casas, shown in the attitude of protecting the Indians. Portraits of several historic personages —Padre Hidalgo and Morelos, leaders of the Independence struggle; the heroic Reformist

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Benito Juárez; the Revolutionists Madero, Zapata and Felipe Carrillo Puerto; and Obregón and Calles, consolidators of the national stability—stand out in the multiplicity of figures that form the rich tapestry of Mexican history and serve, in one way or another, to define the difference between the world of today and tomorrow.

The four movable panels that Rivera painted in 1938 for the dining room of the Hotel Reforma, depicting the popular fiestas of Huejotzingo, were responsible for another scandal, since they combined sharp political satire with the carnival spirit. One of the figures was variously interpreted as Hitler, Roosevelt and Calles. The panels were removed

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from the hotel to a private location.

In the succeeding four years the artist concentrated on easel painting, producing many portraits and canvases glorifying native types and customs. One of his best-known portraits is a large oil, painted in 1938, of his former wife Lupé Marin.

But 1940 found Rivera engaged once more in mural painting, with the acceptance of an invitation from the Junior College of San Francisco, California to paint an enormous wall for the Golden Gate International Exposition. The work, measuring approximately 84½ feet in length and 22¾ feet in height, represents a synthesis of the two interests that had chiefly occupied his talents up to that time —the colorful indigenous folklore of his native Mexico and the colossal mechanization and mass production of the United States.

In 1943, following some minor decorations for Ciro's Salon in the Hotel Reforma, Rivera began work on murals in the vestibule of the Cardiological Institute of Mexico, which he completed the following year. The fresco panels depict both the achievements of history's outstanding medical men and the martyrdom suffered by the Spaniard Miguel Serveto for his invaluable contribution to humanity—the discovery of the pulmonary circulation of the blood—when he was burned at the stake in 1553, at Calvin's order.

The greatest national furor of Rivera's stormy career broke in 1948, when his mural *"Sueño de una tarde dominical en el Alameda Central"* ("Dream of a Sunday afternoon in the Alameda") was unveiled in the dining room of the Del Prado Hotel. The work, an engaging fresco tapestry representing a synthetic vision of Mexican history from the conquest to the present, is regarded as one of the muralist's finest technical achievements. In the opinion of many critics, including Dr. Justino Fernández, the conception, composition and the execution are of the highest quality. As he points out, certain fragments, notably the bench in the center foreground on which figures representing the common people are sleeping and dreaming, are exquisite in their poetic registry.

But from the beginning the work provoked controversy, primarily regarding its suitability for the environment in which it was placed. The heated discussions and polemics inspired fanatical mobs to damage the mural, with the result that the hotel management covered the work entirely and kept it from public view for several years. The circumstances are as follows:

Rivera had been accustomed to using slogans, proverbs and lines from the popular *corridos* in his murals (a striking example of this practice is to be seen in his decorations in the Ministry of Public Education patio). In the Del Prado mural he reproduced—in order to characterize the Reform and its anticlerical and antidogmatic ideology—a phrase of the celebrated Mexican philosopher-educator Ignacio Ramírez, who declared in a public lecture, *"Dios no existe"* ("God does not exist"). Ramírez, a brilliant and prolific writer on cultural and scientific subjects as well as a poet, is best known to history under his nom de plume "El Nigromante" (a magician who communicates with the dead). Although the words were taken out of their context and in the original Ramírez statement were an assertion of the agnostic and not the atheistic position—merely holding that the Ultimate Cause or God is unknowable and cannot be defined by any orthodox concept of an anthropomorphic deity—nevertheless the projection of the idea on the walls of the Del Prado dining room was sufficient to create a storm of protests. The Archbishop of Mexico, Sr. Dr. Luis María Martínez, refused to bless the new hotel at the inaugural ceremonies, and a series of student riots followed. With the first outbreak Siqueiros and other painters rushed to the home of Orozco, who, though not on the friendliest terms with Rivera at the time, joined his fellow artists in their effort to protect the mural from the vandalism.

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As to the motif of the mural itself, the dream seems to end in disillusion. The whole concept reveals Rivera in a contemplative mood not evidenced in his other creations. In any event, the theme—in a setting of a picturesque period that marked the height of the Díaz power and splendor, in which also appear figures symbolizing every phase of the pageantry of Mexican history—gave the artist an excellent opportunity to display his remarkable gift for painstaking, meticulous research.

Some of his most delicious humor is shown in his self-portrait, in which he appears as a young lad in quaint broad-striped stockings and knickerbockers, his hand held by a female skeleton representing his dead mother. Wearing an exaggerated feather boa and an enormous picture hat adorned with ostrich plumes, the *calavera* stands beside José Guadalupe Posada, the famous Mexican engraver whose art, as we have elsewhere noted, exerted such a profound influence on both Rivera and Orozco. Behind the young Rivera is his future wife Frida Kahlo, in an attitude of loving protection.

Above at the right is the Revolutionary apostle Francisco I. Madero, destined to change the dictatorial scheme of things controlled by General Díaz and his *científicos,* who, in their top hats and frock coats, are seen with their aristocratic ladies attired in "gay nineties" elegance. In the background tapestry are Conquistadores and viceroys; Sor Juana Ines de la Cruz, the gifted seventeenth-century poetess; the compassionate Franciscans and the merciless Inquisitors; heroes of the Independence and the Reform; the brave defenders of Puebla against the French invaders; and the foreign exploiters of Mexico's natural resources, smoking big cigars and wearing the typical derby. Here also are men of the Church, men of the sword, men of greed and men of selflessness, dominated by the bronze visage of the great *benemérito* Benito Juárez, the pure-blooded Zapotec Indian who, despite the obscurity of his origin, rose through sheer merit to the highest position in his nation's government and won world admiration.

On the urging of his intimate friend, the poet Carlos Pellicer, and others, Rivera erased the offending *"Dios no existe"* in April, 1956 and in its place painted the words: *"Conferencia de la Academia de Letrán de 1836."* This phrase, also pronounced by Ramírez in the *"Dios no existe"* discourse, was merely another but more tactful way of communicating the idea. Following its restoration by the master restorer Guillermo Sanchez Lemus, the mural was uncovered.

On September 6, 1960 the wall constructed for this most delightful yet nostalgic fantasy of Rivera's vast creation—and perhaps the most profound revelation of his mature thinking and intuitions—was removed to the Del Prado's main lobby. The wall itself—weighing 17,500 pounds, was encased within a steel "boxcar" of seven and a half tons. The removal and re-installation work was accomplished at a cost of more than a half million pesos. In its new setting the mural is now available to the general public and is already a focal point of tourist interest. And, in the truest sense, it has become the property of the Mexican people.

One of Rivera's more recent murals, executed in plastic materials on the walls and floor of the distribution chamber of the Lerma Reservoir, has all but disappeared, owing either to faulty material or to the artist's lack of experience with the new medium. Another, on the façade of the Teatro Insurgentes, is a vivid mosaic decoration composed of elements and symbols of the stage and screen, interspersed with social and political criticism.

The large mural at the entrance of the new Social Security Hospital again contrasts the methods of the pre-Hispanic with those of the modern cultures—the ancient herbal doctors and cures with present-day surgery.

Rivera left an unfinished decoration in mo-

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saic and sculptural relief on the exterior wall of the Olympic Stadium in University City. Discussing this work with us shortly before his passing, the artist said: "The reliefs which extend around the stadium building represent the history of sports in Mexico from the pre-Hispanic era to the present day. The section reproduced represents the union of the Indian and European races resulting in the birth of a new Indian Mexico. The latter comes forth embracing peace in order to develop itself upon the foundations of the ancient culture of Quetzalcoatl and, under the wings of the University, a universal modern culture."

Rivera spent the winter of 1956 in Moscow, under medical treatment. While there he painted a number of canvases and water colors and made sketches of Russian scenes and types that were exhibited in Mexico City in the spring of 1957. He was commissioned to construct and decorate a curved wall in La Sala de la Independencia in Chapultepec Castle, but because of his rapidly failing health the project remained untouched. The work was undertaken by Juan O'Gorman and executed according to his own designs.

Among Rivera's later paintings are two of mural proportions, based on burning political controversies. Both works—"Signers of Peace" and "Glorious Victory"—denouncing imperialistic machinations against an American people, are properly regarded as propaganda posters.

Rivera's gifts as a designer and builder, as exemplified in two structures, have been lauded by the architect-painter Juan O'Gorman, who wrote: "The first is a monumental edifice, although small, of extraordinary proportions built in the Pedregal of San Pedro Tepetlapa to house the marvelous collection of ancient Mexican sculpture which, with such loving care, thought and cost, this Mexican master succeeded in assembling as a gift for the Mexican people. The other is a little private dwelling with a studio that he built for his wife, Frida. Here, despite the existing scarcity, he applied his talent to architecture, achieving, aside from the result of a home that adequately served its functional purpose—because of its proportions, the materials employed, its form and color—a remarkable aesthetic effect."

The little private dwelling described by O'Gorman was converted on the death in

Last photograph of Rivera, taken by Bernice Kolko in 1957.

1954 of Frida Kahlo, the gifted Mexican painter whom Rivera had married in 1930, into a museum where many of her paintings are housed, together with a collection of Rivera's works.

A collection of 55,481 precious archaelogical objects, with an estimated value of more than four million pesos, was left to the nation in the artist's will, together with the great museum at San Pedro Tepetlapa, to which Juan O'Gorman referred and to which Rivera gave the name Anahuacalli. Dr. Eulalia Guzmán, one of Mexico's outstanding historians

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and defender of the ancient indigenous races against the attacks of the Spanish chroniclers, was left in charge of cataloguing the enormous collection.

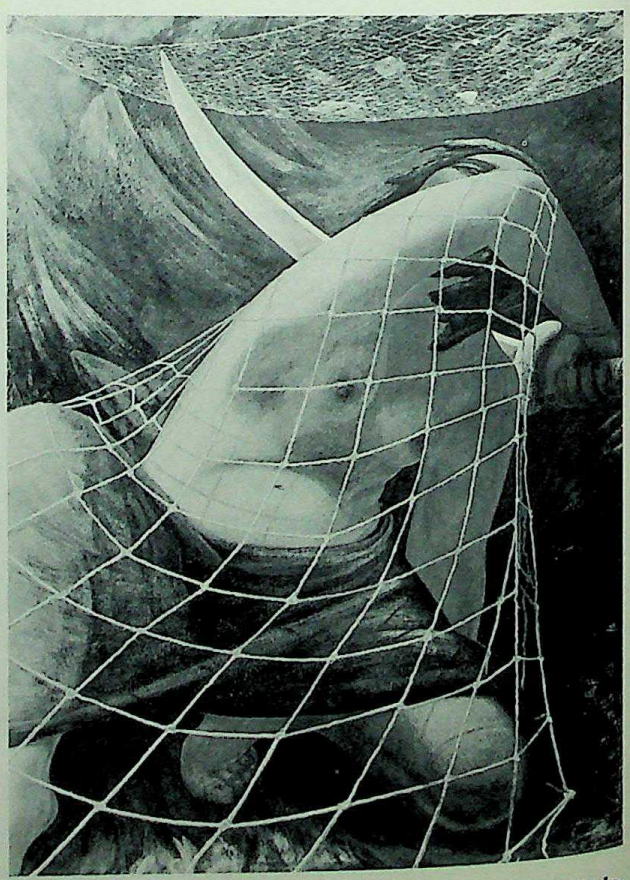
During the final months of his life Rivera headed a movement to outlaw H-Bomb tests. He died at the age of 70, on November 15, 1957, survived by his widow, Emma Hurtado de Rivera, and two daughters born during his marriage to Lupé Marin. His death marked the closing of an epoch in Mexico's artistic and political life.

XAVIER GUERRERO

Quiet Xavier Guerrero has been called, most aptly, "the uncommon common denominator of the individual trends that weave into a Mexican Renaissance." At least, Golden Age records show that he was responsible for most of the unusual techniques, time- and money-saving inventions that utilized the cheap and abundant native materials for painting. It is conceded that his contribution was no less important in the projection of Mexico's national forms and new social concepts than the personalities of the highly individualistic artists themselves.

An entire decade before the Mexican masters were given walls to paint, Guerrero, born December 3, 1896 in San Pedro de las Colonias, Coahuila, was an experienced muralist. In Guadalajara, where, in 1911, the family established its home following some years in the City of Chihuahua, Xavier painted murals and *plafónes* and held exhibitions of his works. A little later he began his own personal experiments in fresco. His love of painting and architecture was recognized even in his childhood, when he undertook the tasks connected with the arts in his father's decorative painting shop. Having conquered many techniques, the young Xavier was able also to impress his elders with his skill and to secure clients for his creations. At the age of fourteen he persuaded a wealthy businessman in Guadalajara to "commission" him to paint a fresco depicting local scenes on the walls of the client's new residence. He also decorated the Sindicato Unico de Choferes de Jalisco, individual members of the union defraying the costs.

In 1912, when only sixteen, Xavier became a soldier in the Revolution. This experience, combined with his native Indian heritage—both parents were Aztec—deepened not only his social consciousness but his feeling for the



GUERRERO. "Self-Defense of Latin America," detail of pyroxylin mural, Palacio de Bellas Artes.

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indigenous material that awaited the artist on every hand. Xavier's knowledge of techniques was destined to be useful to others as well as to himself.

When he went to Mexico City in 1921, Roberto Montenegro made him technical director of the federal mural project. While Montenegro worked on his large-scale decorations in the former chapel of S. S. Pedro y Pablo, using the encaustic evolved by Guerrero, the technical director himself attended to the co-ordination. In the cupola of a lateral shrine he painted the signs of the zodiac in distemper (an admixture of raw eggs with colors) on a white plaster ground. Between windows and architectural features he gave play to his poetic fantasy with garlands borne by blue birds and black birds and walls and pilasters draped with waxen camellias.

Montenegro introduced Guerrero to Rivera, who was commissioned in March, 1923 to decorate the new Ministry of Education building. Frustrated in his first attempts with the encaustic medium, Rivera eagerly turned to fresco under Guerrero's expert guidance. Rivera gave full public credit to his technical advisor for the discovery of what was hailed in the newspaper *El Universal* of July, 1923 as "the secret of the *Mexica.*" After weeks of experiment, and many trips to the ruined city of Teotihuâcán in order to compare his *taller* results with the pre-Columbian murals at the ancient site, the exultant Xavier presented Rivera with the proof of his success. Guerrero himself has recalled the incident.

"At last, I made an entirely satisfactory sample and showed it to Diego, who said: 'We will save this sample, imbed it in the finished work and alongside it paint your portrait with the date of the discovery.' " Guerrero relates that he wanted then and there to take the sample "because Diego was clumsy in handling small objects." But Rivera hammered the sample to bits and crushed the last large fragment absent-mindedly underfoot and "spoke no more of painting my portrait."

GUERRERO. Water-color study for a mural.

Jean Charlot, an eager spectator and active participant in the early media experimentation, writes of Guerrero: "As he had done with encaustic, he streamlined fresco to fit the Mexican milieu, using nopal sap as an agglutinant."

Dealing with the same period, Siqueiros pays tribute to Guerrero when he states: "More than the fine art artist, he was a worker in practical painting, a studious searcher for autochthonous technical material, a good explorer for traditional landmarks, a tireless walker who ambled through the most remote of our regions unearthing old plastic secrets. He was both the worker and the scientist of our group."

In 1924 Guerrero founded, with Siqueiros, the group organ *El Machete,* which they posted at night on billboards. Later he was one of the founders of LEAR—League of Revolutionary Writers and Artists. His proletarian

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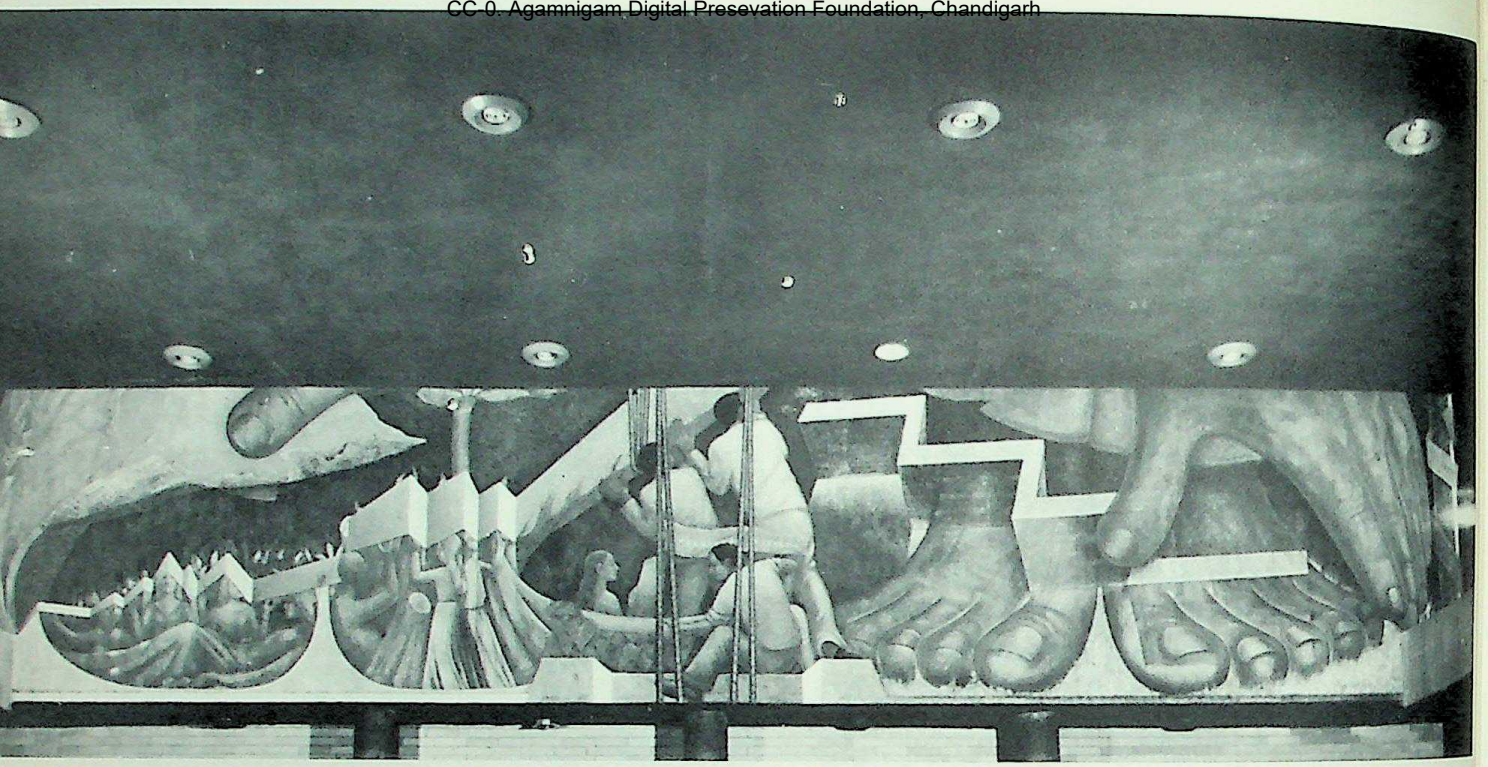

GUERRERO. Mural (pyroxylin and colored cement), in the Presidente Juárez House of Pensions.

sympathies had been formed in his boyhood, a heritage from his father, an ardent union man and the organizer of a local guild of painters and decorators.

More than a decade of travel, begun in 1929, interrupted Guerrero's technical research. He roamed little-known lands in eastern Europe and western Asia, sketching dramatic landscapes and colorful native types.

Shortly after his return to Mexico the government provided his services, together with those of David Alfaro Siqueiros and several assistants, as a gift to Chile in the rehabilitation of the Escuela México in Chillán, almost destroyed by the earthquake of 1939. Guerrero painted some 400 square meters of mural decorations with the theme of Reconstruction and Hope. In this same period he assisted with the murals of the club building for the placement of Hippodrome workers. His personal work in Chile was a large fresco in a modern hall used as a workers' recreational club. His interpretation of the family is described as "a man and a woman, each over thirty feet long, joined at the top in a 'V' barrel vault, where a child levitates in a zenithal position." The fresco, predominately of a soft coral-pink color, is executed on a mortar rich in a cement that permits modeling.

Again in Mexico, he assisted Rivera when the maestro resumed work on the chapel of the Chapingo Agricultural School and personally decorated the residence of the institution's director. In the body of the chapel Guerrero painted floral decorations in monochrome that lyrically linked the vaulted spaces.

In 1941 Guerrero won first prize in an industrial-design competition sponsored by the Museum of Modern Art in New York. His first one-man show in Manhattan was held in 1947 at the Knoedler Galleries, at the inaugural of which he was represented by his wife Clara Porset Guerrero, one of Mexico's leading designers and decorators. Several of Guerrero's paintings and drawings—cherished for their spirit of repose and their suggestion of

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silence—were acquired by distinguished collections in the United States as a result of the exhibition.

With the late Miguel Covarrubias, Guerrero was and is active in organizations that promote East-West cultural relations, notably The Mexican Friends of the Chinese Peoples' Republic.

Since 1950 Guerrero has executed several murals. The first of the series was a decoration for the Cine Ermita, at Tacubaya, D.F., entitled "Day and Night" and built around the general theme of witchcraft. In 1953 he painted two important murals at Cuernavaca, both in the new synthetic plastic materials in which he had been an early experimenter. One of these murals is in the home of Lic. José de Jesús Lima, and is titled "America." It is executed directly on the stone wall in various media, including luminous materials. The other, an interpretation of the great Morelos as Servant of the People, adorns the classroom of the school organized by Lic. Lima for the poor, directly across the street from his private residence. Morelos is represented in an active role, wielding the sword of justice and awakening the children of Mexico to a new national life.

In the same year Guerrero painted what is generally regarded as his finest public mural for the Benito Juárez House of Pensions in the Mexican capital. The work, executed in pyroxylin and colored cement, interprets the story of pensions from the standpoint of the employees who, in their youth and vigor, made national progress possible and who, therefore, in their incapacity or old age, richly deserve the assistance of the state.

Xavier Guerrero recently outlined for us his aesthetic creed, as follows:

"Realism is my fundamental concept of the plastic of painting. I believe it is the most universal and human language, always performing a social function and removed from the trivial. As water seeks its level, realism seeks it own in the real theme of life itself. I do not wish to say that a work should always be marked by the tension of the fearful struggle. The task of the realist painter is a dialectic problem and it should express this duality. The hand of the temporary plastic creator should simultaneously sustain a weapon of the struggle and a vehicle of beauty, on condition that it is not the 'commercial' beauty, adapted to the taste of the most decadent elements of the actual society."

GUERRERO. Sketch for a mural.

Of late years he has been devoting himself more and more to easel painting, also drawing. To again quote Jean Charlot, "These pictures are simply the essence of a nature pitched finer than most to that which is of wide human worth in a given blood and locale."

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FERNANDO LEAL

Combining history with fantasy, realism with legend or religious fervor, the fresco murals of Fernando Leal, born in Mexico in 1900, represent, as Dr. Justino Fernández has indicated, an aesthetic expression within the limits of the Classical and the Baroque. Associated with the latter style are his well-defined forms, brilliant color and wealth of detail. Yet Leal never abandons the solid base of Classicism, as evidenced in his meticulous drawing and his conscientious concern with minutiae. Both values are strikingly present in one of his major works, executed between 1931 and 1933, in the Anfiteatro Bolívar of the Mexican capital—a series formed by an ensemble of ten murals representing episodes in the life of Simón Bolívar, Liberator of the Americas. Discussing this mural, Leal has evaluated it as his favorite work, since Bolívar is the historic figure whom he most admires.

LEAL. José San Martin (*left*) and José Artegas (*right*), details from mural, Anfiteatro Bolívar.

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LEAL. Mural, Anfiteatro Bolívar.

Another mural that he says continues to give him pleasure is the decoration of the National Railroad Station in San Luis Potosí, painted in 1943. "The machine," he pointed out in a recent interview, "is the theme of our epoch, giving its rhythm to our modern life." Developed in two panels, the work depicts old and new modes of travel. In the foreground of the first panel an elegant litter and a coach of former centuries are shown being violently at-

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tacked by bandits. In the distance a steam engine glides across the same area with superb assurance and in complete safety. The second panel depicts the unloading of locomotive-driven freight cars at a port, where a ship awaits the merchandise. This scene is contrasted with a dwelling of medieval times. Of the two murals, painted a decade apart with different sentiments and under different world conditions, Leal observes: "One represents the epic—the other the material. But my themes have always been varied. I have decorated the chapel on the hill of Tepeyac and have painted in oil, presidents and many individuals."

Although a master of the fresco medium, Leal's first murals, "La Fiesta del Señor del Chalma" (1922-1923) were executed in encaustic, in the stairwell of the Preparatory School patio facing a wall decorated by Charlot. The subject was a ritual dance based on an incident in a village church in the mountains of Puebla.

Leal was one of the first to use native Indian life and custom as the subject of heroic fresco murals. He interpreted folk fiestas two years before Rivera painted similar themes, on the theory that murals were "public property"—intended for the "understanding and enjoyment of the people. The muralist who paints public walls," he has said, "cannot afford idiosyncrasies."

The dawn of the Golden Age found him, although only twenty years of age, a professor in the San Carlos Academy, today the Escuela Nacional de Artes Plásticas. He held this post for many years and, before his retirement, founded the class in mural painting.

In 1927, Leal decorated the building of the

LEAL. "The Dancers of Chalma," encaustic mural, National Preparatory School.

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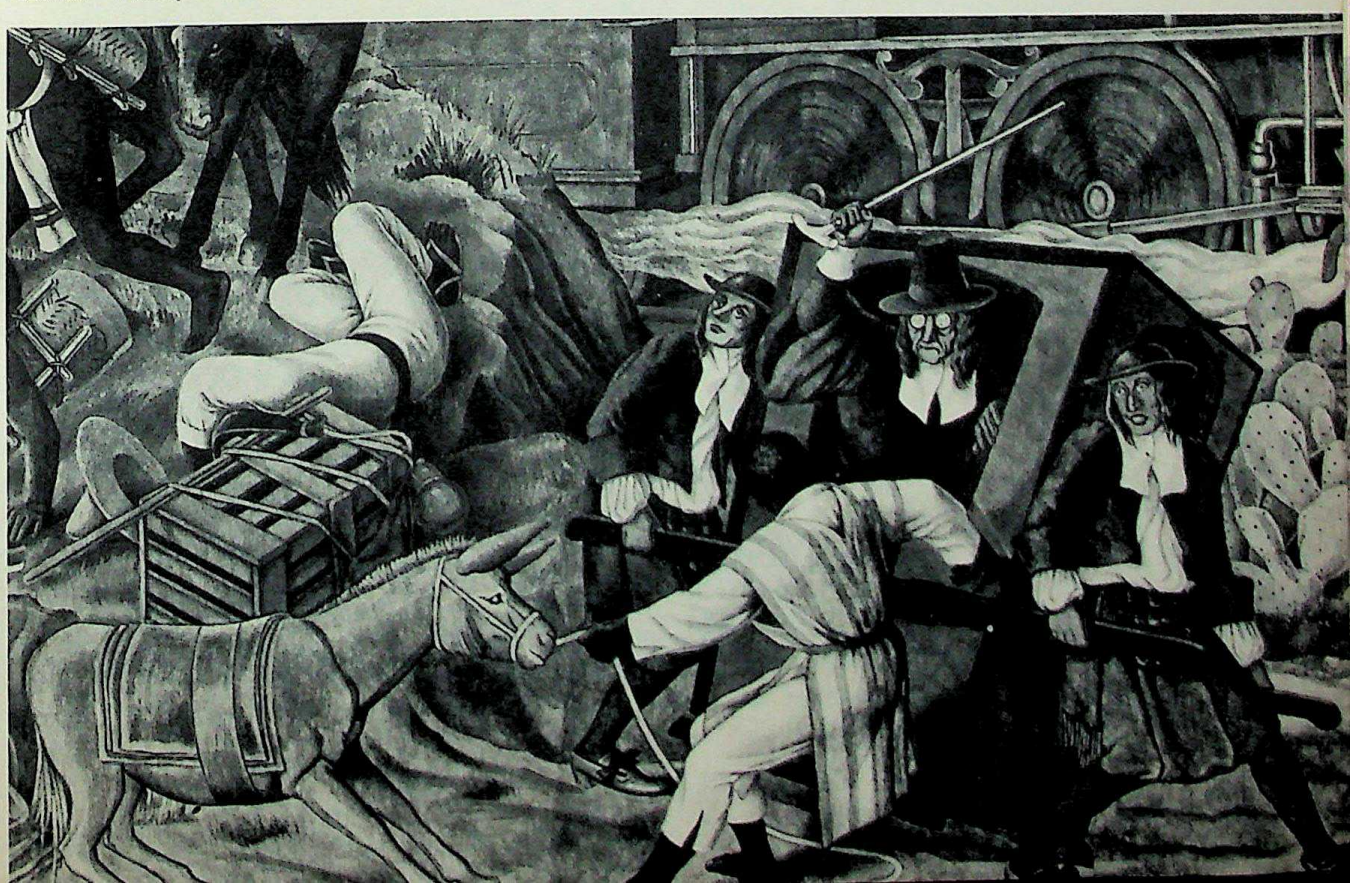
LEAL. "Transportation," detail from mural, San Luis Potosí railroad station.

LEAL. "Transportation," detail from mural, San Luis Potosí railroad station.



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Health Department but his work was later destroyed. Other murals painted in 1935 in the Lecture Hall of the National Institute of Panama met with the same fate. These murals, titled "Neptune Enchained," were destroyed because of their critical content, expressed through irony.

Leal occupies an outstanding status in contemporary Mexican art as a painter of religious subjects. His works in this field embrace the decoration of the Chapel of Tepeyac and the Villa de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, both painted in 1949. The Tepeyac murals cover six walls and the dome. Here he has painted Indian, Negro and white angels, a symbol, the artist explains, "that heaven is without racial bias and draws no color lines." Other religious murals by Leal include the decorations of the triumphal arch of the nave in the Church of Saint Dominic, at San Luis Potosí. In the same city he has executed a mural in Italian mosaic for the Teatro de la Paz.

As an easel painter, especially of portraits, Leal has won international recognition. Many of his canvases figure in distinguished collections in Mexico and abroad. His chief claim to fame, however, will doubtless rest upon his original contributions to Mexican Renaissance muralism, of which he says: "It is not that we Mexican muralists invented new theories and launched them from platforms, as were the European 'isms' formulated in previous manifestos. The first Mexican muralists had been creating, without it ever having been proposed to us—a certain form of expression that is now recognized as Mexican."

As a writer and critic, Leal achieved marked success with his page "Artes Plásticas" in *El Universal,* which he founded. His most recent publication is a book titled *El Derecho de la Cultura,* wherein the author urges government to give proper value to culture as one of the fundamental human activities. In all legislation, he demonstrates, preference has been given to other activities—particularly to politics and economics.

In his studio on Tacuba, in the heart of the capital's old business district, Leal, a youthful-looking veteran, works steadily at easel painting, except for the few hours a week he devotes to teaching. His one-man show, held during September, 1960 in the Galería de Arte Coleccionistas in Mexico City—the first since 1945, when he exhibited at the Rancho del Artista—was a sensational popular success. Writing in *Excelsior,* the well-known critic Margarita Nelkin, frankly admitting her preference for painting of "other tendencies," nevertheless stated: "While prolonging the social customs originating in France and Spain of the romantic period and which until recently found expression in a single 'Mexican School'—for a while confined to popular themes and immobilized images of direct reality—the painting of Fernando Leal achieves such solid compositions as those titled 'Miseria' and 'Fecundity.' A sensitivity in the recapturing of the spectacle of Nature produces fragments as suggestive as the acid tones of green at the base of the 'Caceria Huasteca,' or the background of 'La Selva.' A valorous grasp of his medium balances the group of 'The Zapatistas.' A drawing that knows no interpretative obstacles gives precision to the proportions of his 'Nude Woman in Repose.'"

MIGUEL COVARRUBIAS

Miguel Covarrubias was born in 1904 in Mexico City, and he died there in 1956. A member of a prominent family of the capital, his childhood was surrounded by every ad-

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vantage. As a youth he sketched the municipal life of the Mexican Renaissance, who nicknamed him *Chamaco,* or Boy. In 1923, while still in his teens, he received a scholarship from the Mexican Government to study in New York. There his rare talent and charming personality attracted the attention of art lovers and publicists. Among them was Frank Crowninshield, editor of *Vanity Fair*. The witty and often satiric drawings of the young Covarrubias soon became a regular feature of that publication, and received sensational acclaim. His sharp line drawings caricatured the social and political personalities of the day, but he particularly delighted in depicting the Negro types of Harlem.

His ambition, however, was to be a serious painter rather than a caricaturist. He achieved

COVARRUBIAS. Tropical Mexican studies for murals. Courtesy of Mizrachi Gallery.

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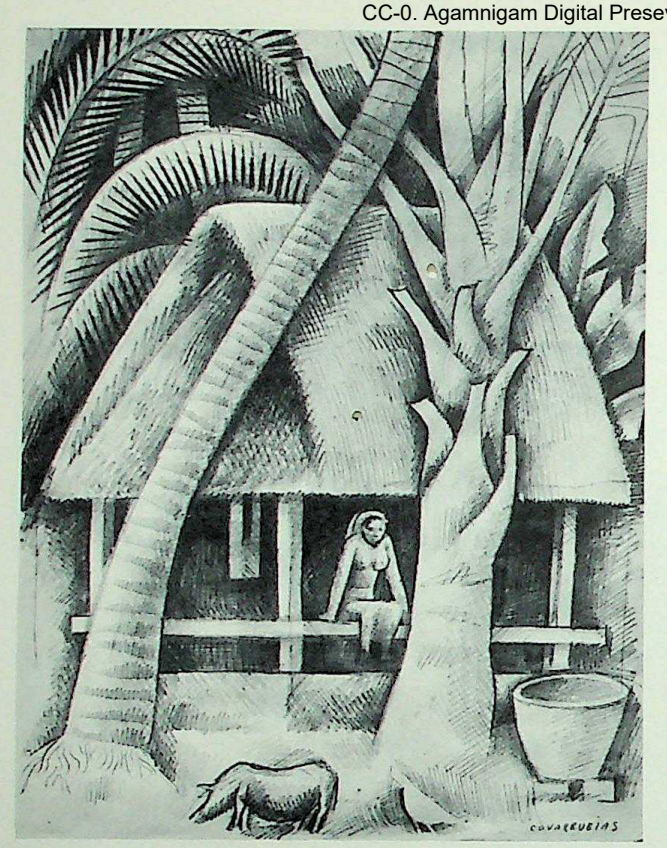

COVARRUBIAS. "Tropical Mexico," drawing. Courtesy of Mizrachi Gallery.

his goal as a result of his extensive travels in Mexico, Europe, Africa, the South Seas, the Orient and the East Indies, where he devoted himself to the study of native customs and folk art. His book on Bali, published in 1938 and for which he received Guggenheim Fellowships, is regarded as a classic, not only because of its beautiful illustrations but because of its important ethnological and archaeological contributions.

Covarrubias was a highly successful painter of map murals, and an outstanding example was shown in the Pageant of the Pacific Exposition, held in San Francisco in 1939. With Gabriel Fernández Ledesma and Roberto Montenegro, he executed map murals for the Hotel del Prado, in Mexico City. One of his best-known works in this field is his famous Map Mural of Mexico, on the main wall of the Popular Arts Museum on Avenida Juarez. He also painted many fine easel pictures.

His brilliant published works include *Mexico South, The Eagle, the Jaguar and the Serpent* and other writings on ethnological and archaeological themes, particularly on the cultures of the Tehuantepec and Olmec regions. Regarded as an authority on the Olmecs, Covarrubias became a teacher in the School of Anthropology at the University of Mexico. His vast collection of Olmeca relics are now in the National Museum of Mexico, where a gallery bearing his name has been installed.

He was also a co-director of archaeological explorations in Tlaltilco, State of Mexico.

In the brochure entitled *In Memoriam,* by the eminent Mexican anthropologist Dr. Daniel F. Rubin de la Borbolla, appears a reprint of the following article from *Ethnos,* published in Sweden in 1957:

"We recall his shyness, his dedication to noble causes in defense of weak man against social injustice, misery and tyranny. He was loyal to his ideals, his ideas and his political and social convictions. He always expressed these with honesty, firmness and freedom, without aligning himself with any party. He fought with all the strength of his individualism for causes that he believed were just.

"In his later years, his contribution in the field of anthropology and of art was of incalculable value.

"He was on the Board of Directors of Popular Arts and Industries; he participated in the founding and functioning of the National Museum of Popular Arts and Industries of Mexico; he was the Director of the Department of Dance of the National Institute of Fine Arts."

As a member of the official board of Art Advisors, Covarrubias was advisor to the Secretary General on the decoration of the United Nations Headquarters in New York. He was active to his last days in liberal causes, and was the organizer and guiding spirit of The Mexican Friends of the Peoples' Republic of China. His untimely death came as a severe loss to Mexico's artistic and intellectual life.

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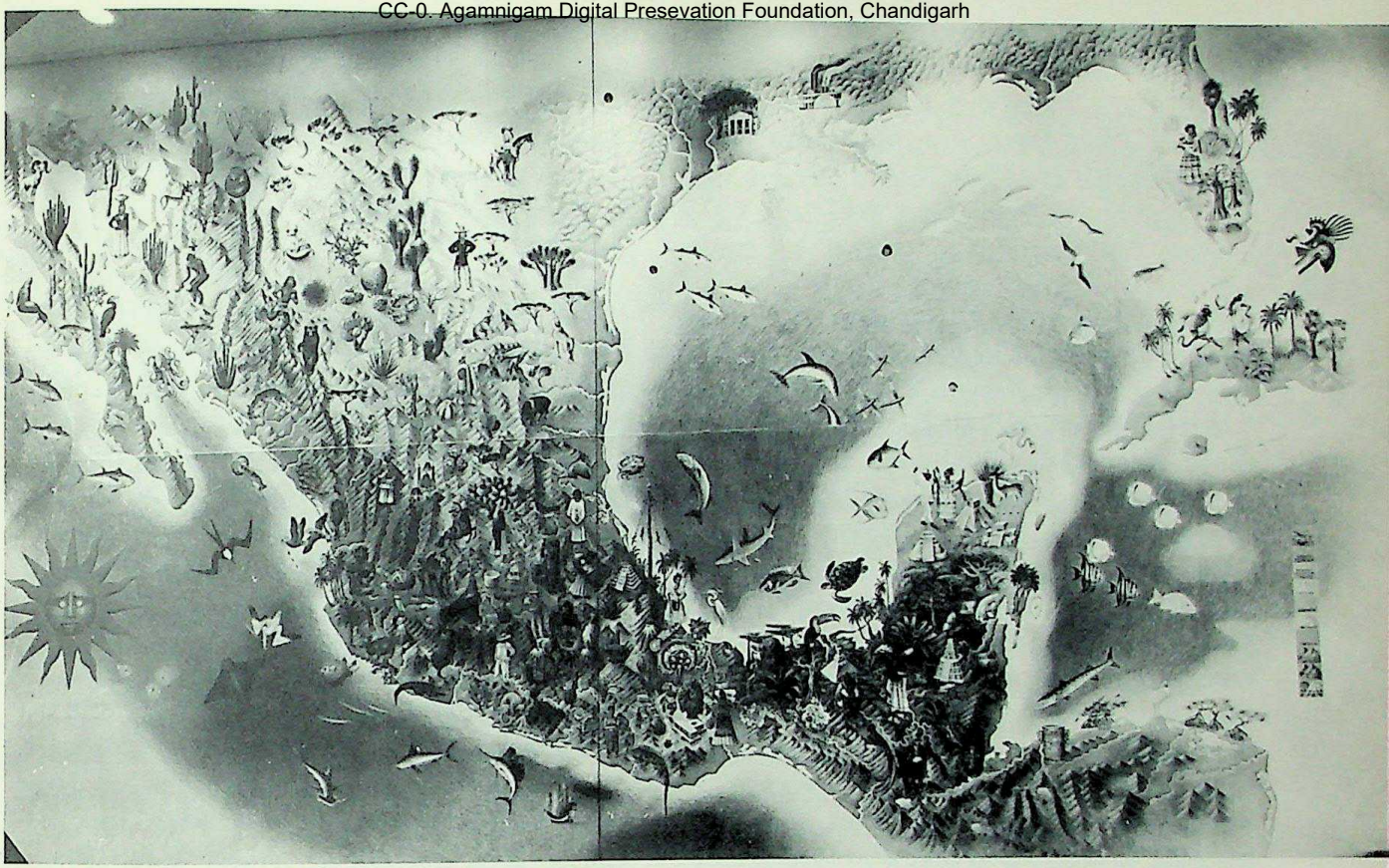

COVARRUBIAS. Mural map showing products of Mexico, lobby of Hotel del Prado, Mexico City.

COVARRUBIAS. Tourist's map of Mexico, mural, lobby of Hotel del Prado, Mexico City.

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DAVID ALFARO SIQUEIROS

Probably nowhere in modern art are the tensions of a world in transition and the conflicts born of changing social patterns more dynamically reflected than in the murals of David Alfaro Siqueiros.

The veteran painter, who with Orozco and Rivera was a "giant" of the Golden Age, continues with unabated vigor to interpret revolutionary themes upon the public walls. And, while from defenders of the status quo he may encounter a more formidable resistance today than at any period of his turbulent life, Siqueiros, pleading the "ideologic functionalism" of his plastic diatribes, is granted, in Mexico's democratic freedom of expression, the right to exalt views that are often officially opposed by the organization paying for the work.

The controversial artist, whose full name is José David Alfaro Siqueiros, was born in Chihuahua on December 29, 1896. His father, Cipriano Palomina, was a native of the State of Chihuahua—as was his mother, Teresa Siqueiros Barcenas—but of Portuguese descent. At the death of his mother when he was two years of age, Siqueiros was entrusted to the care of his paternal grandparents, Antonio Alfaro and Eusebia Palomina, who resided in Irapuato, Guanajuato. His grandfather, a *Michoacáno,* had been an ardent *guerrillero* in the Juarista army, in which he had risen to the rank of colonel. This early liberal influence left its lasting mark on the artist's ideology and shaped his tendency toward "direct action."

In 1907 Siqueiros returned to the custody of his father in the Mexican capital and entered the Franco-Ingles College, conducted by the Marist Fathers—for an education, the artist points out, consistent with the religious character of his father. From childhood he had been familiar with the religious painting of the Mexican Colonial period. His youth, however, was dominated by the influence of the budding Revolution, a movement with which his precocious and rebellious sister Luz was spiritually aligned, despite the almost monastic atmosphere of the paternal home.

In 1911 Siqueiros, who at this time still preserved the name of José David Alfaro, entered the National Preparatory School and attended night classes at the Academy of San Carlos. He participated—with Jesús Ibarra, Raziel Cabildo, Miguel Angel Fernández, Ignacio Asúnsolo, José María Fernández Urbina, Fidias Elizondo, José Clemente Orozco and others—in the Academy's celebrated student strike of 1911. Destined in his stormy life to experience the hardships of prison on several occasions, Siqueiros served his first sentence for throwing stones at the Academy's director. His ordeal was eased, however, by the candies and other gifts that were brought to him daily by his numerous admirers. Of the strike he says: "All our modern painting movement stems from this act of pedagogical-political rebellion. It was this action, however infantile, that established our first contact with the living problems of Mexico and the Mexican people."

In 1913, along with some of the same leaders of the 1911 strike, he joined the student conspiracy against the usurper Victoriano Huerta, forming part of the so-called "complot" of Alardini and Gurrion. Through the influence of Dr. Atl, the then-Revolutionary

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leader, Siqueiros entered the Constitutional Army and rose from the ranks to the grade of lieutenant. In 1914 he became a member of the staff of General Manuel M. Diéguez, outstanding foe of Pancho Villa, and chief of the Division of the West, which was formed of University students and included Jesús Ibarra, Francisco Valladares and Octavio Amador, among others. His attractive personality and remarkable energy soon won for him rapid advancement. He was rewarded for his fidelity with a diplomatic appointment when Carranza, the First Chief of the Constitutional Army, became President of the Republic.

Siqueiros was sent to Europe in 1919 as military attaché with the rank of captain, an appointment motivated by Ing. Juan de Dios Bojorquez, then Minister of the Interior. Siqueiros' undeclared objective was a return to his art studies. In Paris he formed a friendship with Diego Rivera and contacted the moving spirits of the post-Cubist European art movements. He also associated with the outstanding European radicals whose social doctrines fanned his own revolutionary ideology. The result was his issuance of the celebrated "Manifiesto a los Plásticos de America," in the magazine *Vida Americana,* a document that provided the basis for the organization of the Syndicate of Mexican Painters and Sculptors. Now, assuming the name of his mother, Siqueiros returned to Mexico in 1922 to spearhead the organization of his fellow painters—including José Clemente Orozco, Diego Rivera, Dr. Atl, Xavier Guerrero, Fernando Leal, Fermín Revueltas, Ramon Alba, Jean Charlot and a group of young helpers—into the famous Sindicato, which was to become the foundation of a new socially conscious art that reinvigorated mural painting for the first time since the Italian Renaissance. Among the first murals painted by Siqueiros were "The Laments" and "The Burial of the Dead Worker" in the National Preparatory School.

Commenting on the Siqueiros murals of this period, Dr. Laurence E. Schmeckebier stated in his *Modern Mexican Art,* published by the University of Wisconsin: "The best mural that Siqueiros painted in the Preparatory School, indeed, the most significant one he ever painted, is the unfinished fresco, 'The Burial of a Worker.' Instead of being a grotesque variation on a traditional religious theme, it attempts for the first time to express a definitely constructive content glorifying the struggles of labor in the manner of the artist's work in *El Machete.* The immediate inspiration was very likely the ruthless execution of Felipe Carillo Puerto, the liberal Governor of Yucatan, by a band of de la Huerta reactionaries in 1924. The huge blue coffin, with the hammer and sickle—worker and peasant symbols—flanked by four heavy brown figures, form a group set against a dark brown background. The grotesque expressions of the solid and well-modelled faces, although inspired by ancient ceremonial masks, are perfectly integrated into a solemn monumental scene reminiscent of the traditional Entombment."

In 1923 Siqueiros was co-founder, with Xavier Guerrero, of the paper *El Machete.* Dismissed from his government mural projects in 1926 because of his political differences with the Ministry of Education, Siqueiros engaged almost exclusively in the forming of labor syndicates. In the State of Jalisco he organized four syndicates of miners, and during this period he occupied the post of Secretary General of the Federacion Obrero de Jalisco. It was said that he divided his time between actually working in the mines and mural painting. In collaboration with Amado de la Cueva, he decorated the walls of the Salon de Actos of the University of Guadalajara. The studies for these frescoes are among his finest drawings.

Even at that early period, the Siqueiros themes were machines and screws, hammers and sickles. As Anita Brenner, in *Forma,* November, 1926, points out, they were "social

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rather than political symbols and accepted primarily in the soul of the painter as inescapable verities." Accompanying this article as a footnote was a statement by the editor, Salvador Novo, declaring that *Forma* "recognizes the work of Siqueiros for that which is its solid plastic significance without being interested or in the slightest degree approving of his philosophic or political ideas."

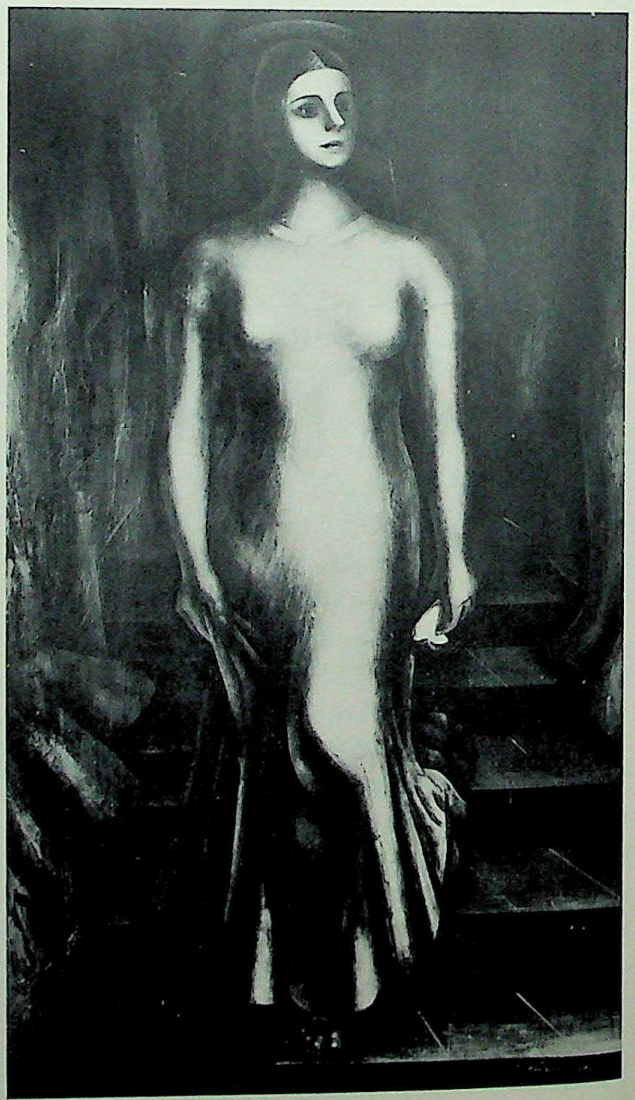
In 1929 he attended the Fourth Congress of the Communist International in Moscow, as a delegate of the Mexican miners. On his return to Mexico, he was named General Secretary of Confederacion Sindical Unitaria de Mexico. A year later he attended, as Mexican delegate, the Congreso Continental Sindical at Montevideo. He went to Buenos Aires and was expelled from the Argentine for pro-Labor political activities. Returning to Mexico, he was imprisoned in the Penitentiary of the Federal District for his participation in the May First Demonstration, remaining there for one year.

Working in Taxco, Siqueiros resumed painting in 1931. In 1932 he visited Los Angeles, painting a mural for the Chouinard School of Art and giving a practical outdoor course in mural painting. Out of this activity, grew the large-scale mural "Street Meeting" and another still larger, titled, "Tropical America." During this period he adopted new theories of exterior muralism, in which the plastic materials of industry were substituted for fresco.

In 1933 Siqueiros returned to the Argentine, where he gave conferences on Mexican mural painting and, after a short period of incarceration for his public speeches against the military dictatorship of General Justo, he was permitted to paint a mural in the town of Don Torcuato, in a house belonging to the director of the newspaper *Critica,* a work realized with "Silicate Krem."

Upon his return to Mexico in 1934, he was named President of the National League Against War and Fascism. In 1935 he engaged in his celebrated polemics with Diego Rivera, in the course of which he advocated a global, universal attitude for mural painting, and in the same year the restless artist returned to New York, where he established the Siqueiros Experimental Workshop. With the assistance of José Gutiérrez and other painters, he improved techniques that used pyroxylin and similar modern plastic materials. Three works of this period now form part of the collection of the Museum of Modern Art in New York.

In December of 1935 he went to Spain, with the object of aiding the Republican cause, in its struggle against Fascism, with effective pictorial propaganda. His enthusiasm for the



SIQUEIROS. "María Asúnsolo," oil.

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SIQUEIROS. Detail from vinylite mural showing the capitalist use of electric power. Stairway in the headquarters of the Syndicate of Electricians, Mexico City.

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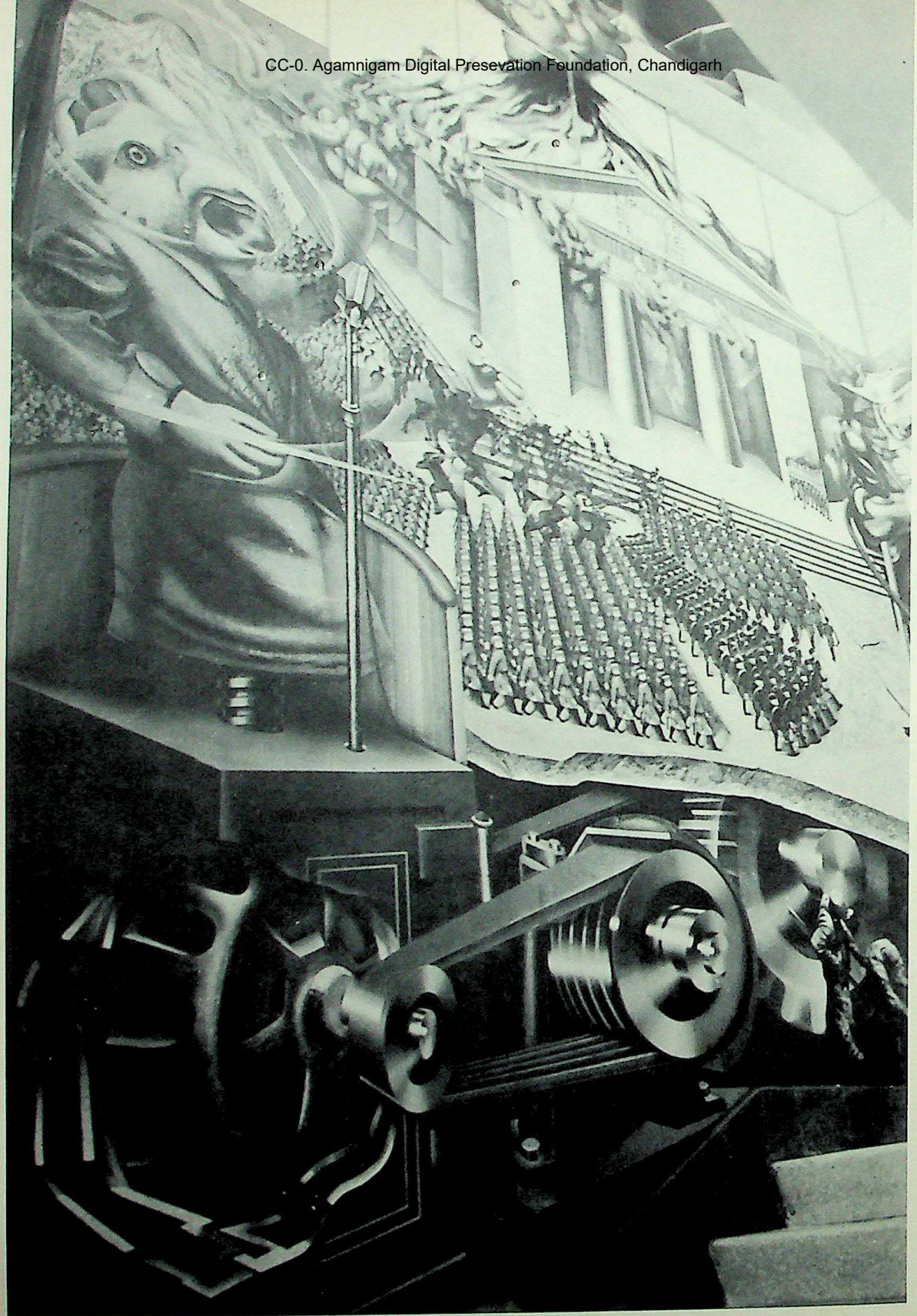

SIQUEIROS. Detail of the vinylite stairway mural in the headquarters of the Syndicate of Electricians.

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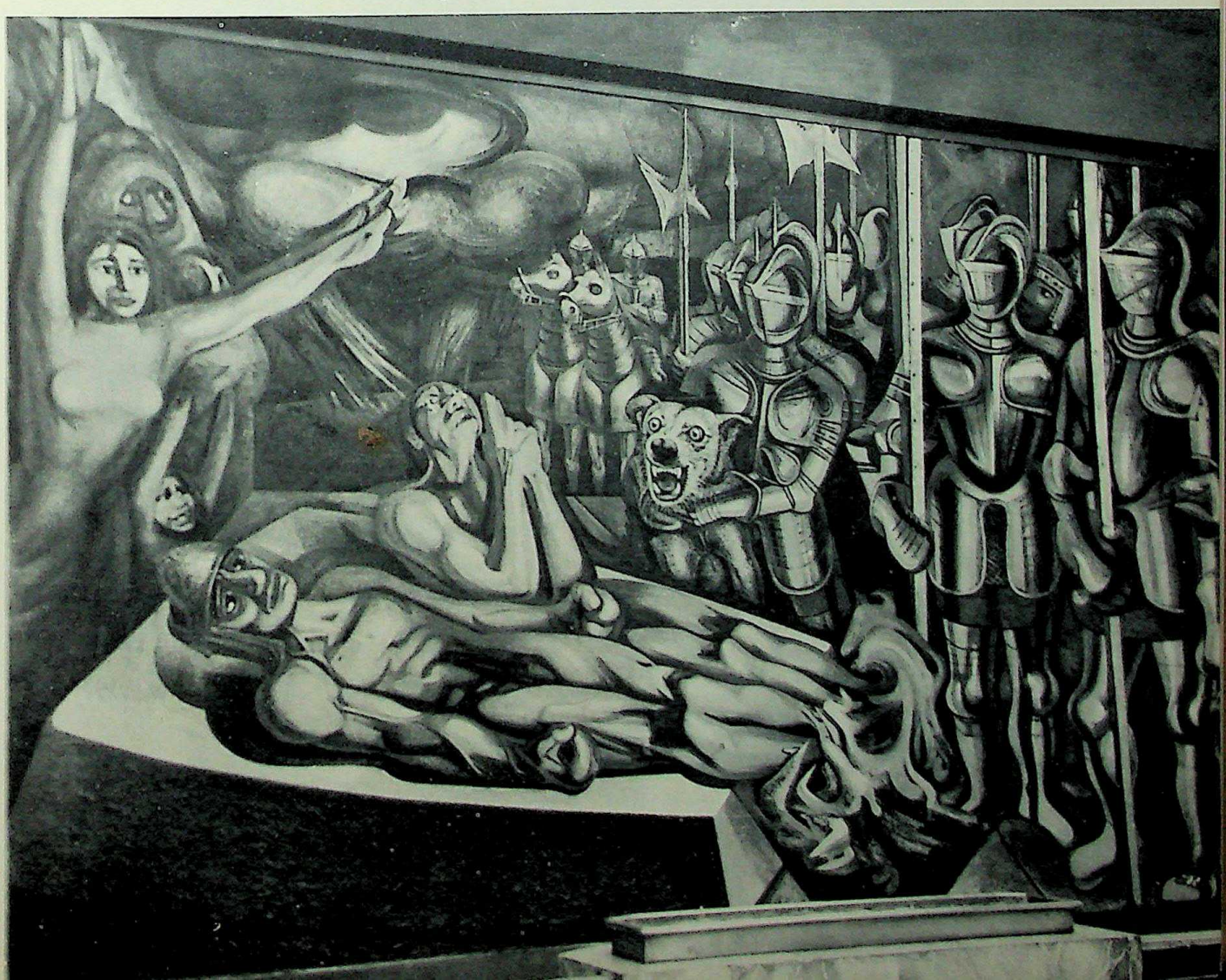
Republican cause and his military experience soon led him to join the Popular Spanish Army. During the year and a half of bitter fighting he occupied important posts, finally assuming command of the Twenty-ninth Division in active combat in the Sierra de Altamira.

In 1939, once more in Mexico, Siqueiros founded the small paper *Documental,* which presented arguments in favor of the Spanish Republicans, who later sought exile in Mexico. He alternated his anti-Fascist activities with painting, and his exhibition at the Pierre Matisse Gallery in New York was the result. Three of the works of this group were purchased by the Museum of Modern Art in New York to complete its Siqueiros collection. In the same year, with the assistance of a group of Mexican and North American students, he painted a large mural for the new building of the Mexican Syndicate of Electricians in the Mexican capital. This work, in four panels, each measuring approximately 12¼ feet wide by approximately 16¼ feet high, and executed in vinylite, interprets the "exploitation of electric energy by capitalism and the gradual decline and final death of the system."

In 1940 he took part in the bitter political struggle that resulted in the assassination of Trotsky. Legally cleared in the proceedings that followed this event, Siqueiros left for

SIQUEIROS. "Cuauhtémoc," left panel of "New Democracy" mural (pyroxylin), National Institute of Fine Arts, Mexico City.



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SIQUEIROS. Detail of "Cuauhtémoc," "New Democracy" mural, National Institute of Fine Arts.

Chile, and in the city of Chillàn he executed the mural "Death to the Invader." This work, adorning the walls of the Escuela México, was painted under the patronage of the Mexican Ambassador. Measuring 260 square meters, it occupied Siqueiros and his assistants for an entire year, and was the gift of the Mexican Government to Chillàn, which had been destroyed by the 1939 earthquake. Leaving Chile in 1943, Siqueiros journeyed to Cuba, holding conferences en route in Peru, Ecuador, Colombia and Panama on modern Mexican painting.

Finally returning to Mexico, he engaged in an intensive period of painting, producing the mural "Cuauhtémoc Against the Myth" for the Centro de Artes Realistic Moderna, at Calle Sonora No. 9. In 1945 he painted a mural of sixty square meters on the theme "New Democracy," with side panels of twenty square meters each, titled "Victims of Fascism." Both murals were installed on November 20 in the Palace of Fine Arts, in commemoration of the anniversary of the Revolution. This interpretation of Cuauhtémoc as a symbol of Mexico also commemorated the military victory of the democracies against Nazi Fascism.

In 1946 Siqueiros began a mural for the Treasury Building of the Federal District titled "Patricios y Patricidas," in which he utilized all of the modern materials and methods and applied all the theories he had advocated over the years. The work measured 300 square meters.

In the past decade Siqueiros has painted some of his most controversial murals. Foremost in this recent group is the large-scale decoration, in Mexican mosaic with sculptural and polychromed elements, on the horizontal west wall of the rectory at the National Uni-

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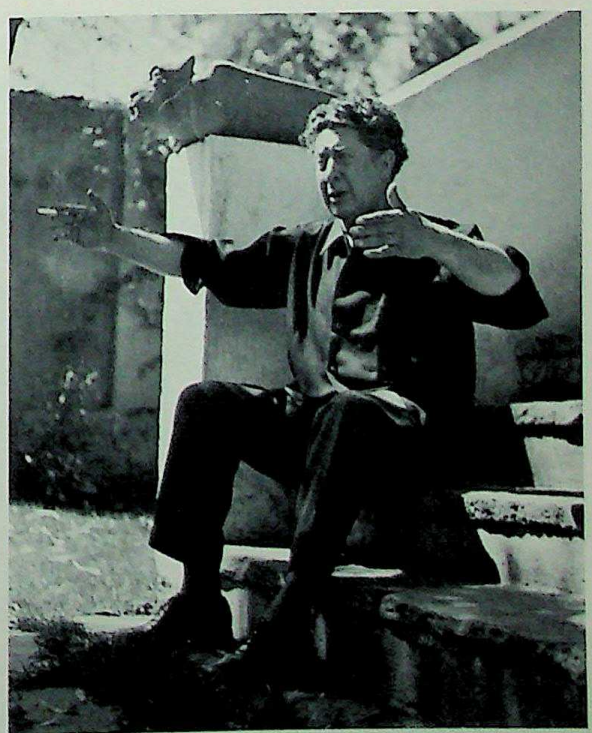
versity of Mexico. The mural, titled "The People Go to the University—the University Goes to the People," was designed for the modern age—"to be viewed," the artist points out, "by motorists traveling at the rate of sixty miles an hour." His mural in the rotunda of the Social Security Hospital Number One deals with the hazards of labor, hazards taken by the worker to make national progress possible.

Early in 1957 the artist left Mexico on an extensive tour that included Egypt and India. He also visited Poland and held conferences on mural art in Warsaw.

Siqueiros refers to an unfinished mural, commissioned in 1959 by the National Mexican Actors Association, as a "prisoner of the Reaction." In a recent interview he explained to us that, pending the decision of the Civil Tribunal, his work, removed from the wall of the Teatro Jorge Negrete, will remain under court custody.

A defense of his position in the selection of the theme for this mural was made in June, 1960, in a booklet titled *Mi Respuesta* ("My Answer"). The artist's own version of his legal difficulties with the Association was first given in a conference in January, 1960 at the Central University of Caracas, Venezuela. Discussing the historic precedents for freedom of artistic expression, Siqueiros said in part: "The National Association of Mexican Actors commissioned me to paint a mural which, due to his death, Diego Rivera could not execute. I was asked to interpret the history of the theatre up to the contemporary cinema.

"I argued that the subject seemed too general. I proposed that the work should deal with the art of the theatre confronting the life of Mexico—the Mexico of today. This theme, I maintained, moreover, would serve as a chronological standard in national theatre history. My point of view was accepted, but what happened afterwards? They gave an opinion from the very start that I, a pioneer, and one of the founders of the Mexican mural movement could not, despite my long pictorial record, do more than make a recommendation to the actors, and through them, indirectly, to the playwrights, that they do with scenic art what we had done with painting. I might have done something of a general nature, something euphonic, or pleasant, full of 'sweetness and light.' Had I done so, I would have avoided the present problems. But to have followed such a course would have been treasonable to Orozco, Rivera, Goitia, to Dr. Atl—as the first theorist of our movement—to Xavier Guerrero, Fermín Revueltas, Ramón Alva de la Canal, O'Gorman, Chávez Morado, Camarena, Estrada. I would have been treasonable also to the engravers, Leopoldo Mendez, Beltran, Bustos, to scores of painters and printmakers living and dead—in fact, to all those who in my country have, for the past fifty years, placed their political action and their spirit at the service of their people and their nation. Since it was not possible for me to



SIQUEIROS. From a photograph taken by Bernice Kolko in 1959.

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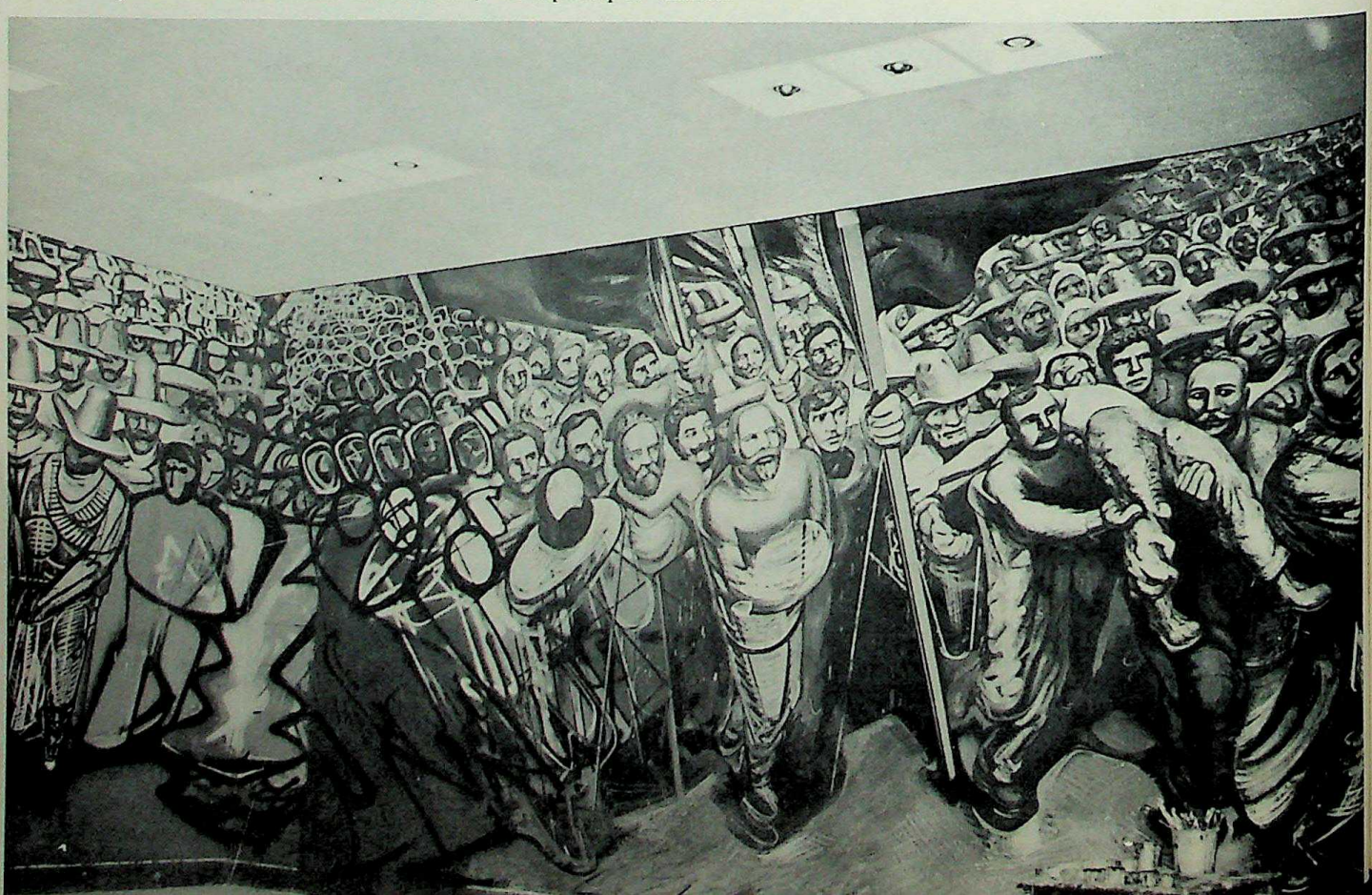
SIQUEIROS. Portrait of Angélica.

pursue another course, I attacked the problem. I divided my mural into two wings—one representing my concept of what the theatre, the cinema and the television should be in the present and near future, and the other, what the theatre in Mexico has been in the past.

"In regard to the past, I learned an extremely interesting thing with the help of the writer Armando de Maria y Campos. I discovered that in reality, Mexico had a political theatre—an extraordinarily political theatre—a fact that is universally ignored. I discovered, for instance, that during the Revolutionary epoch, many playwrights, including Usigli, wrote dramas containing violent criticism of the "caciquismo," then emerging in the federal as well as in the regional governments among the directors of the agrarian movement and among the labor leaders. This is the theatrical criticism of a new bourgeois class, the embryo of the new oligarchy."

SIQUEIROS. Detail showing strikers of Cananea and Rio Blanco, from unfinished vinylite mural, "Social Revolution," Chapultepec Castle.



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Siqueiros recalls, in his analysis of Mexican theatre history, such dramas as Usigli's *Gesticulador,* and, during the Díaz dictatorship, Ricardo Flores Magon's *Tierra y Libertad,* as well as many others of bold critical content written during the Reform period and even in the viceregal era.

On these and other precedents for what he terms freedom of aesthetic expression—harking back even to early post-Conquest days—Siqueiros bases his right to "record plastically the historic march of the indigenous Mexican masses in their process of 'proletarianization' and the epic attitude manifested in such a metamorphosis."

Siqueiros is currently engaged in painting a mural on the lower floor of the Museum of History in Chapultepec Castle. This dynamic work, dealing with the precursors of Revolución Sociál, comprises a total area of 250 square meters. Developed in acrylic resin paint, it is divided into three sections. In the larger central panel a vast mob scene is depicted, with hundreds of angry workers surging forward under the banners of rebellion. They follow in the wake of four fellow workers who bear on their shoulders a dead comrade —victim of the Mexican and foreign military who shot into the crowds of protesting miners during the celebrated Cananea strike.

On the lateral panels will appear portraits of famous revolutionaries before Madero's presidency. From the artist's sketches, one recognizes Antonio I. Villarreal, Manuel Sarabia, Ricardo Flores Magon, Librado Rivera, Gutiérrez de Lara, Praxedis G. Guerrero and other courageous men of the Partido Liberal, who in resisting the Díaz tyranny paid for their valor with imprisonment, exile or death. In the group also appears the North American journalist John Kenneth Turner, author of *Barbarous Mexico,* a book that became an im-

SIQUEIROS. Detail showing Dictator Díaz, the Cientificos and the sycophants from the unfinished mural "Social Revolution," Chapultepec Castle.

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portant factor in forming a new and unfavorable public opinion in the United States of Mexico's "strong man" Porfirio Díaz. Prominent among the Revolutionary heroes are Felipe Carrillo Puerto and Emiliano Zapata.

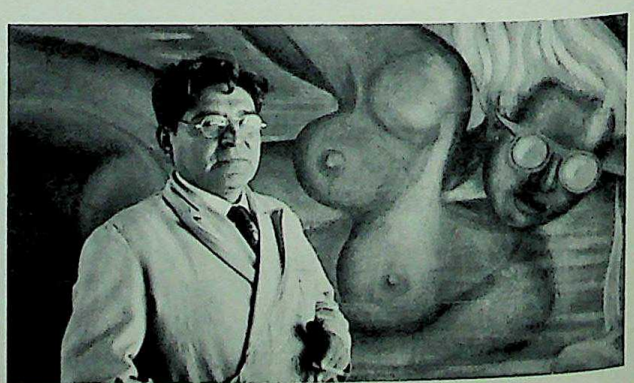
Work on the Chapultepec mural was interrupted in August, 1960, when Siqueiros, who had recently been named Executive Secretary of the Mexican Communist Party, was arrested in connection with alleged complicity in fomenting antigovernment street demonstrations that resulted in violence. On charges of "national dissolution," he was sentenced to prison, and in protest nearly a hundred Mexican artists withdrew their works from the Second Mexican Biennial of Painting, Sculpture and Engraving, which opened at the Palace of Fine Arts on September 5. The imprisonment of Siqueiros was protested by scores of people holding various ideologic positions and by leading intellectuals from all over the world.

JOSÉ L. GUTIÉRREZ

Once in San Francisco, California, in the early thirties, we accompanied José Clemente Orozco to the studio of a sculptor friend who was working on some monumental figures destined for the portico of the new Stock Exchange Building. As the Mexican muralist watched his fellow artist boring into the huge stone blocks with the aid of a powerful electric drill, knocking off corners and breaking down unwanted areas to leave the mass ready for carefully calculated operation with the hand chisel, he exclaimed: "What unnecessary labor is eliminated here! But isn't it a pity that nothing has been done for the painter to save him time and energy, absolutely nothing, to enrich his palette or to protect his creations against the ravages of the years!" Orozco added that despite the boasted advances made by science in other fields, the problems of the painter have been ignored since the Van Eycks developed the oil medium over five centuries ago.

In 1946, however, Orozco could make quite a different statement. For, in the intervening period, José L. Gutiérrez, after long and devoted research in quest of new media, had found some solutions. Through his successful experimentation with plastics, he had not only provided the painter with a more varied range of luminous color but had made possible greater durability for painted surfaces. His synthetic materials, especially vinylite, pyroxylin and ethyl silicate compound for exterior work, are in general demand. Today ninety per cent of all Mexican artists use these plastic paints known as Politec for mural and easel painting.

In the foreword of the catalogue for his Sixth Exhibition, at the Colegio Nacionál in Mexico City, Orozco's own enthusiasm im-



GUTIÉRREZ in front of his mural "Sports" (ethyl silicate on concrete) in the old stadium of the National Polytechnic Institute.

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GUTIÉRREZ in his studio at the Polytechnic.

pelled him to write: "We must not lose sight of the numerous plastics that we now find in full scientific and industrial development in the studio of Experimental Materials for Painting of the Polytechnic Institute, headed by such competent professors as José Gutiérrez and Jiménez Rueda. We are confident that they will provide the painters with new and magnificent materials for their work."

Some of the leading museums of the United States, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Brooklyn Museum, the Fogg Museum of Art in Cambridge, Massachusetts, now use the Politec plastics in restoring old paintings. Gutiérrez believes that plastic paints have opened up a new epoch and that eventually they will replace oils.

Born in 1900 in the town of Miacatlán, a mountain pueblo of Morelos thirty miles south of Cuernavaca, Gutiérrez completed his art studies at the Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, where later he founded a school of drawing and painting. In 1934, while working with Siqueiros on mural projects, he began his experiments in painting materials and decided to explore this hitherto neglected field. Much of his research was done at New York's Forty-second Street Library and in laboratories loaned to him by manufacturers of industrial plastics.

Returning to Mexico in 1945, he taught the uses and possibilities of the new materials—vinyl acetates, nitro cellulose silicons and acrilics. Each of these plastics, Gutiérrez explains, has certain properties of flexibility, adhesiveness and durability, but two or more of them can be used in combination to obtain desired special effects.

Since 1945, Gutiérrez has been Director of Research and Painting Techniques at the National Polytechnic Institute of Mexico City. Among his hundreds of students are artists from the United States, Canada, Sweden, France, Italy, India, Australia and all Central and South American countries. In 1954 his paintings were displayed in the Plaza of the United Nations and at the Newton Galleries in New York. In 1955 he toured Canada under official government auspices, holding conferences on Mexican mural art and giving demonstrations of the new painting materials. In 1956 the Gutiérrez handbook of modern media, *From Fresco to Plastics,* was published by the National Gallery of Canada. As his conclusion to this work, which has just gone into a second edition, Gutiérrez states: "In the last five years, the acrilic resins and emulsions have given to the artist the most satisfactory plastic material for painting over all kinds of surfaces for interior and outdoor painting."

Conceding that plastic paints are superior to any other type for exterior muralism, Gutiérrez warns that success depends upon mixing of the pigments properly and in correct proportions. The ten per cent deterioration noted in the huge Orozco mural in the open-

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GUTIÉRREZ. Detail of "Sports" mural, old stadium of the National Polytechnic Institute.

air theatre of the Normal School for Teachers in Mexico City is due, he points out, to the superimposition of colors. Gutiérrez believes that Politec plastics will soon be recognized to be as enduring as mosaics. He is now engaged in developing a material that can be brushed freely over the surface and then baked onto the wall for an enamel-like finish.

As a painter with several murals in private homes to his credit, Gutiérrez frequently uses the space age and recent astronomical discoveries as his themes, but he is best known

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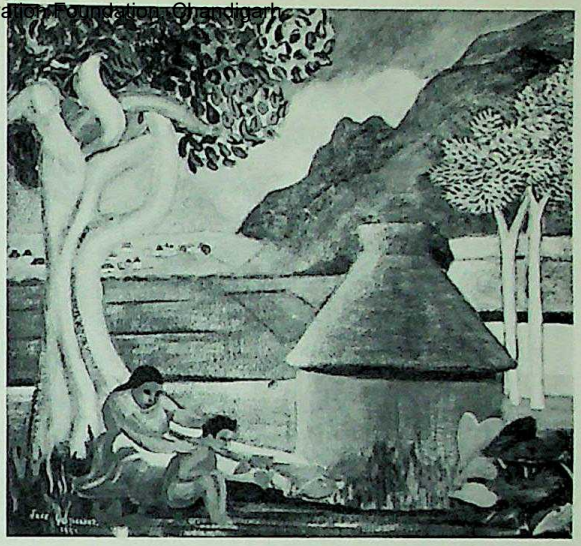
for his delightfully intimate and humorous scenes of Mexican pueblo life. He has had several one-man exhibitions in Mexico, Canada and the United States, and has participated in numerous group shows in Mexico, Latin America and Europe.

Many of his works on the space-age theme represent a new style, which has aptly been called "psycho-physico-dynamica." Executed in mesonite on concave and convex surfaces, the paintings employ geometric forms while the colors move in diagonal projections.

On the achievement of Gutiérrez, David Alfaro Siqueiros has written: "He has broken the single-technique control of traditional painting that dominates not only the academic but the pseudo-modern snob approach, by accumulating different easy modern processes of combining pyroxylin and vinylite. Moreover, he adds to his techniques metallic elements creating new effects, such as glass and mirrors. He combines opaque and brilliant materials, the smooth and the rough, with equal success. In this way, he has enormously enriched the textural feeling of his entire work."



GUTIÉRREZ. "Chiapas Landscape" (cellotex with vinylite).

GUTIÉRREZ. "Impact-H" (pyroxylin on mesonite), now hanging in the headquarters of the Mexican delegation to the United Nations in New York.

PABLO O'HIGGINS

As far back as 1931, on the occasion of his first New York exhibition at the John Levy Galleries, we find catalogue references to Pablo O'Higgins as the "Mexican Brueghel." Born in Salt Lake City in 1904, his identification with Mexico came about as the result of childhood experiences in El Cajon Valley, San Diego County, California, where his parents established their home. There he played with Mexican children, learned to speak colloquial Spanish at an early age and, above all, enjoyed intimate friendships with "the little people"—mostly Mexican laborers of the region. O'Higgins learned to draw before he was eight. He also displayed talent in music and gave piano recitals. But, more and more, his youthful impulse impelled him toward creative expression in painting.

His first visit to Mexico was with Miguel Foncerrada, whom he met during the brief

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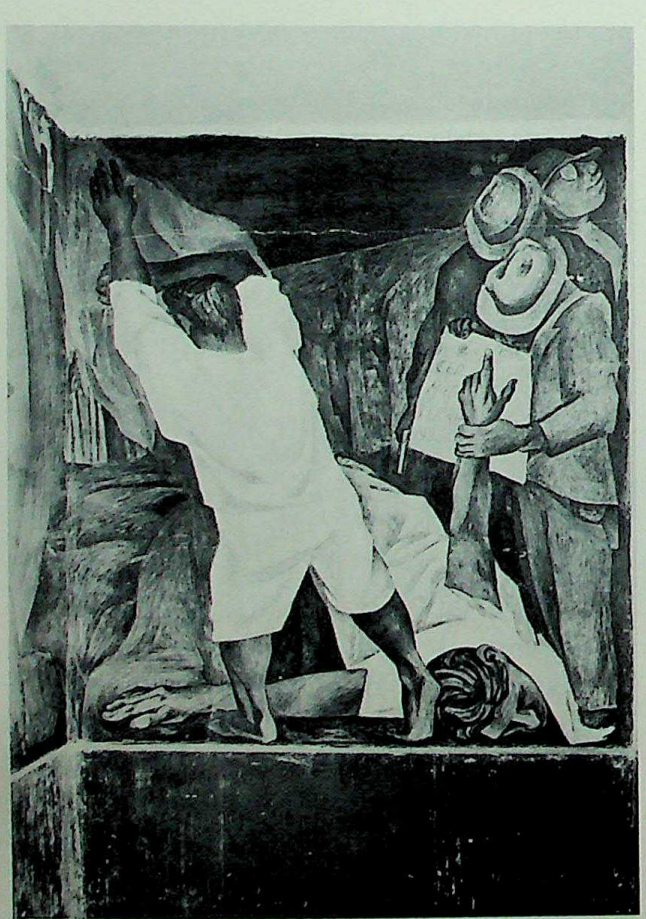
period during which he had studied in a small art school in San Diego. The two young men went to visit Miguel's family at Empalme, near Guaymas. While there, O'Higgins, reading one of the leading art magazines, came across reproductions of the work that Diego Rivera was doing in the National Preparatory School in Mexico City. He was so deeply moved by them that he wrote a letter to Rivera. To his surprise he received an answer. Rivera suggested that O'Higgins go to Mexico City and see for himself what the revolutionary upsurge was producing in the arts, especially in murals.

In 1924 O'Higgins left Empalme and visited Rivera in his old studio at Mixcalco No. 12. Rivera received him warmly and, in the course of a long conversation, said to him: "Don't go to the Academy to study. Go to the Archaeological Museum."



O'HIGGINS. Detail of the Michoacán mural.

O'Higgins not only did this but went into the streets to study the people. He talked to them, lived with them and began to put down roots in his adopted country.

For four years, from 1924 to 1928, he worked as assistant to Diego Rivera on the Chapingo Agricultural College and the Ministry of Education murals. He was out in the rural districts on cultural missions at various periods from 1929 until 1931, when he exhibited a collection of eighteen socially conscious oil paintings in New York, under the sponsorship of Mrs. Francis Flynn Paine. Soon after his return to Mexico City in 1933, after a year in the Soviet Union, he painted his first mural, in the Escuela Emiliano Zapata. Juan O'Gorman, who was in the Ministry of Education, was the architect of the building.

One of O'Higgins' major achievements was a series of large fresco panels on the walls and *bóvedas* of the Abelardo Rodríguez Market in 1934. Other sections of this building were decorated at the same time by Angel Bracho and Antonio Pujol. In 1936 O'Higgins and Fernando Gamboa painted the central panel of the stairway in the National Print Shop—Talleres Gráficos de la Nación—while Leopoldo Méndez and Alfredo Zalce worked on two other walls there.

In 1937 O'Higgins became one of the founders of the Taller de Gráfica Popular—a group movement responsible for Mexico's most powerful anti-Fascist posters; he had previously been an active member of LEAR.

In 1939 the artist executed a mural, on the theme of Mexico's expropriation of oil, in the Escuela Estado de Michoacán in the Mexican capital. Then, in 1945, he went to Seattle, where he left a mural depicting American workers in the Ship Scalers' Union Hall. Later that same year O'Higgins was commissioned by architect Ricardo Rivas to interpret, for humble Mexican mothers, the universal theme of childbirth. The setting for the fresco was the admitting room of the new Social Security Maternity Hospital Number One.

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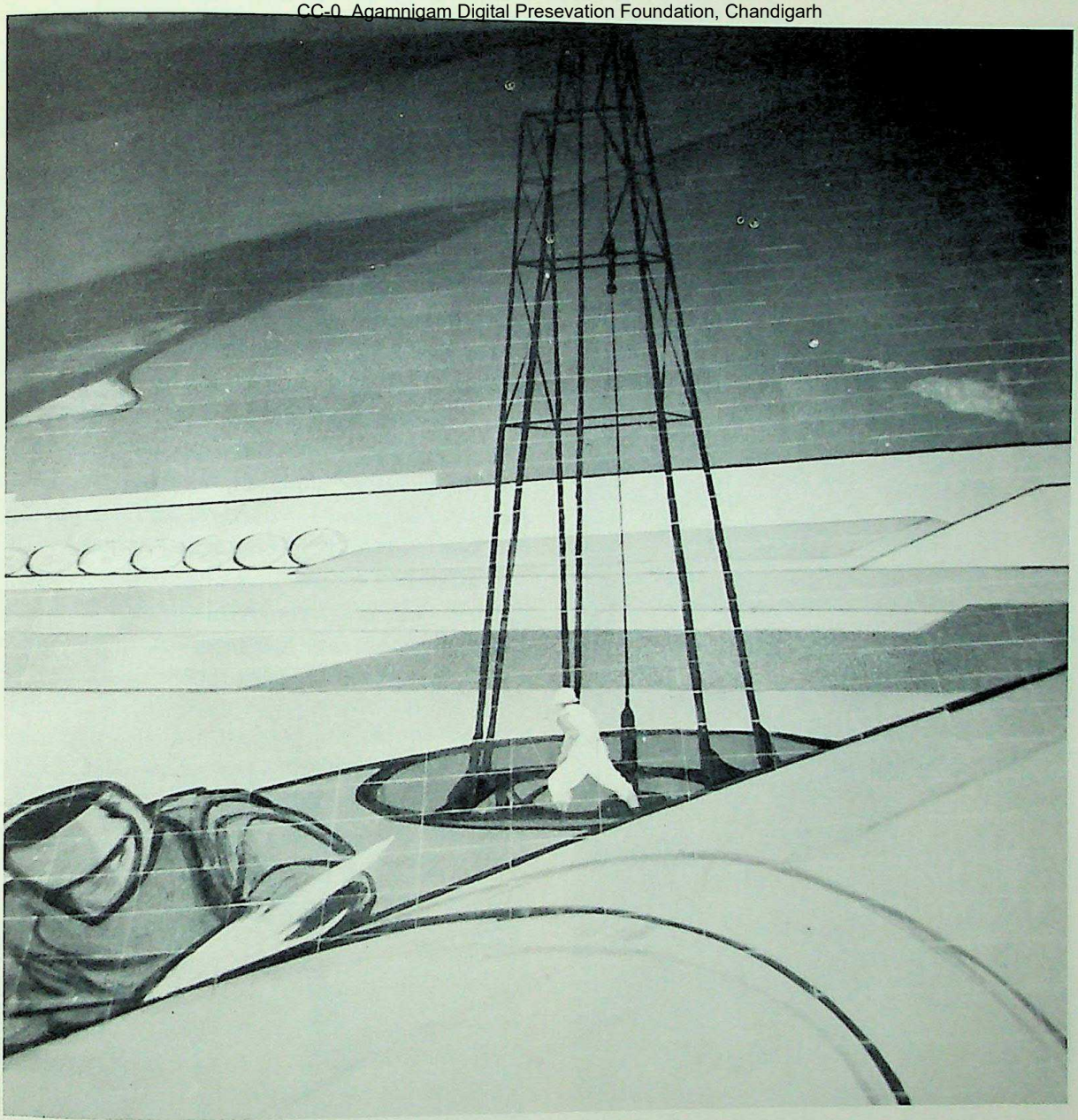

O'HIGGINS. Detail of an exterior mural, Municipal Palace, Poza Rica.

O'Higgins and his co-worker Leopoldo Méndez prepared for the work by careful study of the subject in visits to the delivery rooms of other hospitals. The completed mural depicted the contrast between the methods of science in the well-equipped modern hospital and those of the mid-wife and "magic doctor" in the adobe dwellings of impoverished pueblos.

O'Higgins painted his next mural in 1947, in Caltzonztin, near Uruapan, Michoacán, and following that, in 1949, he executed a mural in the Escuela de Santa María, Tarasquillo, in the Valley of Toluca.

Once again he left Mexico, this time to decorate the walls of the Longshoremen's new Union Building in Honolulu. This was in 1951.

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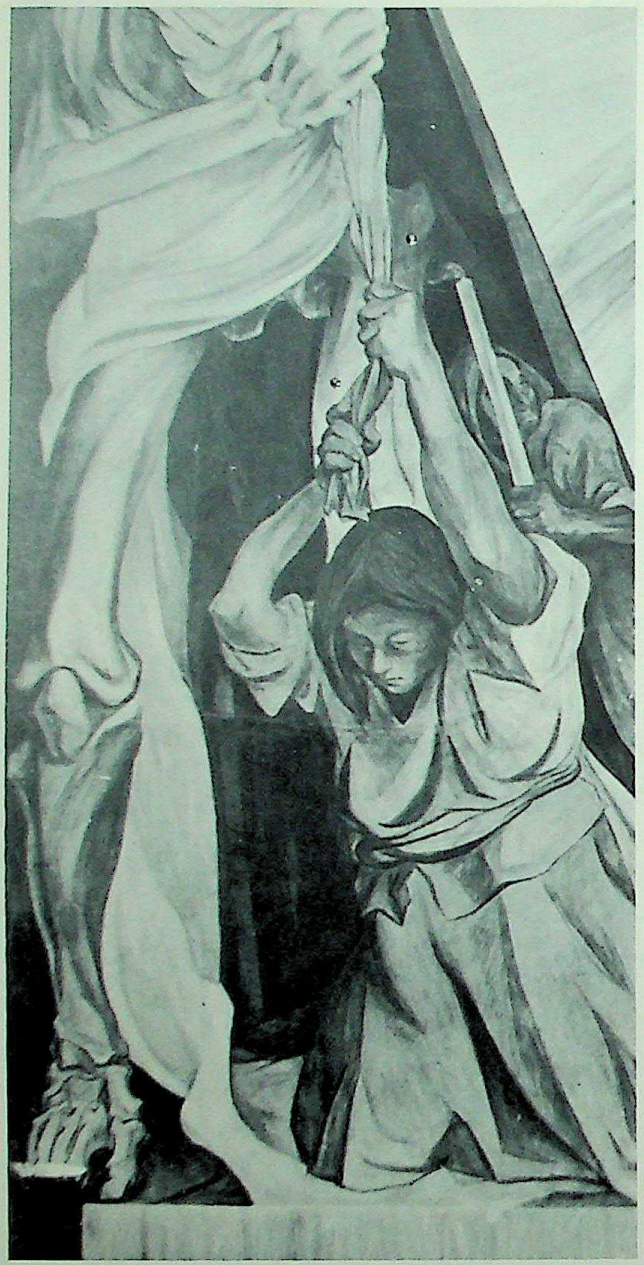

O'HIGGINS. Detail from mural, Maternity Hospital, Mexico City.

In 1958-59 he painted exterior murals at the new Municipal Palace in the recently constructed Oil Workers' Center at Poza Rica.

As the result of an exhibition held in New York in 1938, and another at the Associated American Artists Gallery in February, 1943, many paintings by Pablo O'Higgins were acquired by museums and collections in the United States. Among his favorite themes are the colorful activities of Mexican villages—which he portrays with a zest that recalls Pieter Brueghel's happy scenes of sixteenth-century rural life in the Low Countries—and his work is distinguished by a palette of pallid tones and the most simplified figures and forms. In scores of pueblos throughout the Mexican Republic he is affectionately known as "Don Pablito."

At his studio at Lope de Vega, No. 341, an old section of Mexico City, where the quiet, modest artist works constantly on mural projects, canvases, lithographs and woodcuts, as well as on illustrations for pamphlets and articles, he is visited daily by admiring workers, humble *campesinos,* villagers, and frequently by Mexican and foreign intellectuals. His understanding of the people and the country has been officially recognized by the Mexican Government through the inclusion of his work in all important national exhibitions. He is

O'HIGGINS. Study for a mural.

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honored everywhere as an authentic interpreter of Otomí Indians and their pueblos, of Huastecan tobacco venders, of the handsome women of Tehuantepec. It has been said of him that he does not "examine Mexicans from afar, as a visitor would a new country, but rather paints them with a quality of appreciation, a depth of intimacy and understanding which has come from living among them as a friend."

Since 1930 Pablo O'Higgins has been teaching mural techniques in the famous art school of La Esmeralda, in Mexico City.

When asked for a statement on the future of mural work, he said:

"For the coming murals, their content and plastic message, there should be no more isolation, no more mechanical 'preciousness.' Pull down the barriers to passionate necessity, to the immediate problems of living reality."

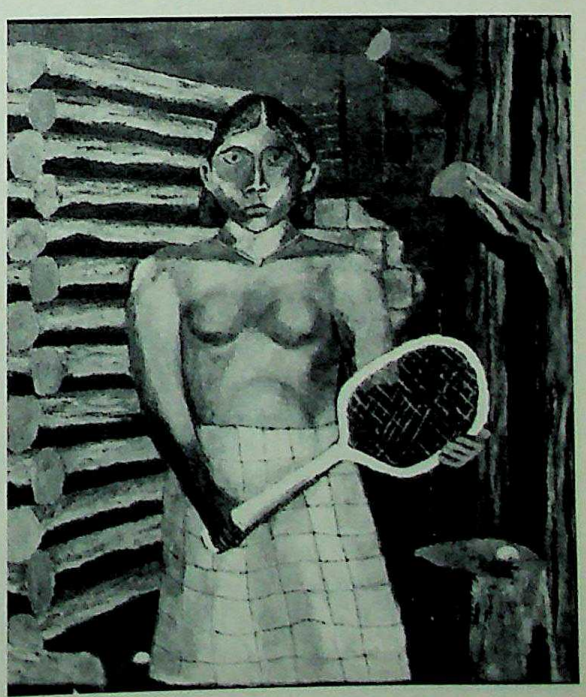
RUFINO TAMAYO

Rufino Tamayo—who is generally regarded as Mexico's leading abstractionist but who rejects the title, contending that his work is not rooted in abstraction but in the principles of poetic realism—was born in Oaxaca in 1899. At an early age his strong art sense responded to the beauty and the picturesque dress of the Tehuanas of the Tehuantepec Peninsula. Later, in his adolescence, when he was brought to Mexico City by an aunt who owned a wholesale fruit business, he was enchanted with the tropical abundance—the bananas, watermelons, chirimoyos, papayas, mangoes—in the open-air markets of the Merced district, where he lived.

In 1915 his aunt enrolled him in a commercial school, but he studied drawing at night, and finally, instead of going to classes in business management, he secretly enrolled in the San Carlos Academy, where he remained for three years. Upon leaving the Academy, he became an assistant to Roberto Montenegro, then engaged in painting the first mural of the so-called "Mexican Renaissance" in the Church of S. S. Pedro y Pablo, transformed by the Ministry of Education into a workers' library.

Years of freedom followed, years filled with feverish study and the satisfying of his aesthetic curiosity, which the rigid academic routine had denied him. By every means available, Tamayo studied modern French painting—the Impressionists, the Post-Impressionists, the Cubists, feeling, as he says, that they alone had the "vitality to nourish and stimulate" him.

In 1926 Tamayo displayed his oils and gouaches in his first one-man show, held in an empty shop on Avenida Madero.



TAMAYO. "Tennis," oil.

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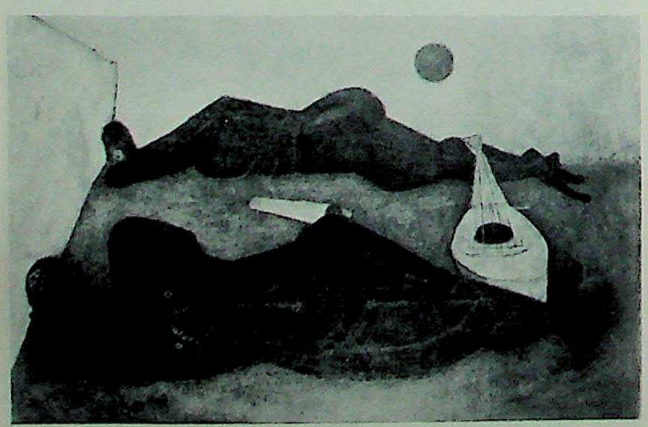
TAMAYO. "Man," oil.

For many years, until 1933, he led a revolt against murals, and was known as the "King of Easel Painters." His low-keyed water colors and gouaches and his provocative mystery-laden oils were enthusiastically welcomed into important North American collections when he held his first one-man New York exhibition in the late twenties. New York, in fact, made such a deep impression on the artist, and his success was so pronounced from the start, that he settled there permanently in 1938. However, he has never lost contact with his own country, and each summer he returns to his home in Coyoacán, where he and his wife Olga, a former concert pianist, devote themselves to their celebrated garden and to the entertainment of their many friends. Tamayo's admirers insist that, despite his assimilation of Parisian School techniques and attitudes, and a sophisticated archaism reminiscent of Henri Rousseau, he still retains a feeling for his native Mexican scene. In fact, some of the painter's best murals are in Mexico, two of the more famous adorning the walls on the first floor of Mexico City's Palace of Fine Arts.



TAMAYO. "Sleeping Musicians," oil.

Although leading the reaction against the epic proportions and the socially conscious themes of his Golden Age colleagues, Tamayo himself turned to mural painting in 1933. His first work in the mural field was the decoration of the edifice now occupied by the Bienes Nacionales. An unfinished panel depicting the Revolution, painted around the same period, is now displayed in the National Museum.

In 1943 he executed his first completed mural in the Hillyer Art Library of Smith College, at Northampton, Massachusetts. His principal theme, "Nature and the Four Elements," is a subjective free creation, but not absolutely subjective—for, as Dr. Justino Fernández points out, the work is "classic in composition, but entirely novel in the forms of its symbols and in its conception." Mother Earth lies under a rainbow, and is cared for by the elements Air, Water and Fire.

Of this two-sectioned work, executed in true fresco and occupying a wall space of 44 feet long by 9 feet high, Tamayo has given the following description:

"The group representing Nature is composed of five figures, of which the central one symbolizes Nature [itself] and the other four the elements. The figure of Nature is of heroic size. It has four breasts and lies in an attitude

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TAMAYO. Mural, National Institute of Fine Arts.

of surrender, to symbolize abundance and generosity. From the rocks which occupy the lower left-hand corner of the panel there springs a blue female figure from whose hands flows a stream of water. This figure symbolizes Water, and both in outline and in movement suggests a spring. Above Water, and descending from the upper corner of the same side, is a male figure in red, symbolizing Fire. The form suggests a flash of lightning. In the upper middle part of the panel, above the figure which symbolizes Nature, one can see another female figure, coffee-colored, and representing Earth. This figure is represented as holding in its arms the figure of Nature, to show that it is in the Earth that we see Nature in all her magnificence. At the right emerges a blue male figure whose outline and movement give it the appearance of an arrow shot into space. This figure represents Air. The whole group is terminated by a rainbow which springs from the figures of Water and Fire, and ends by merging with the figure of Air. This motif, besides serving to give unity to the upper part of the composition, symbolizes Color, the basic element of painting.

"In the part which completes the composition of this first panel another male figure represents the Artist engaged in producing the Work of Art. The latter is symbolized by an abstract composition whose forms and colors, taken separately, bear a certain relation to those of the group that represent Nature, but, taken as a whole, have nothing to do with it. Between the figure of the Artist and the group representing Nature, there are a lyre and a compass, to show that the Artist, when he looks at nature in search of plastic elements, should do so through the medium of poetry and of knowledge, both of which are indispensable, if the work of art is to be authentic and permanent.

"In the second panel there are only two figures: one representing the Observer and the other a piece of sculpture which in this case symbolizes the finished Work of Art. The Observer stands looking at the Work of Art, and his eyes are fixed on it to the complete exclusion of his surroundings. To emphasize the idea that when judging a work of art one must take it as a new creation, independent of the source from which it sprang, the Observer

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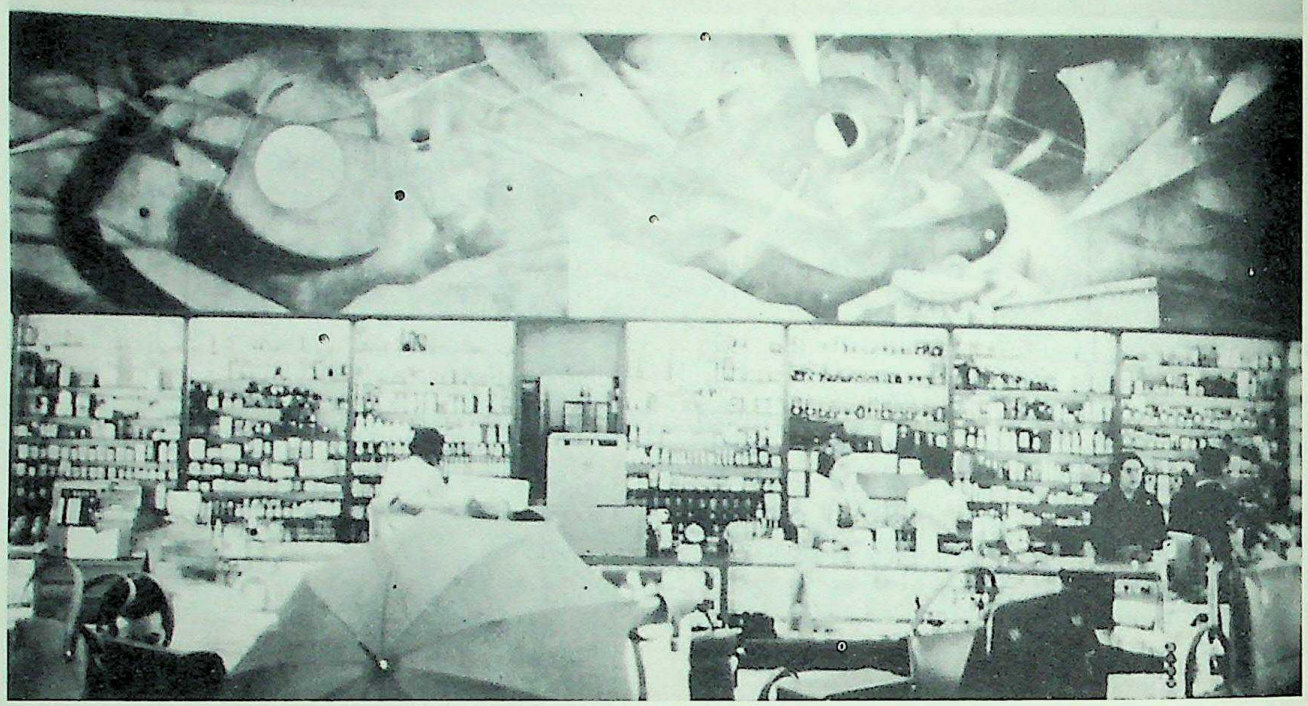

TAMAYO. Mural, Sanborn's Reforma.

stands with his back to the group that symbolizes Nature."

Soon after completing this work, Tamayo began dividing his time between Mexico and New York, teaching and painting. His first trip to Europe was made in 1950, and in that same year his paintings were shown in the Mexican Pavilion at the Venice Biennial Exhibition.

The west-wall mural in the Palace of Fine Arts was painted in 1952, on a commission from the National Institute of Fine Arts, and the following year the artist contributed another mural for the east wall of the same floor.

The first of these murals, painted in vinylite on canvas and titled, "Birth of Nationality," measures approximately 36½ feet in length and 16½ feet in height. Symbolically interpreting the origin of Mexican nationality from Indian and Spanish seeds, the rhythmic work achieves resplendent color harmonies, the deep violet at the base of the huge panel merging lyrically with the phosphorescent greens at the top. The Spanish invader is symbolized in the composition by the horse and cavalryman.

In 1953 he painted his large-scale mural "Hombre" for the Dallas Museum of Fine Arts, Dallas, Texas. A still-life decoration, a vivid array of tropical fruit, was executed in late 1955 for the dining room of the Reforma Sanborn's. One of Tamayo's latest murals, "America," was painted in 1956 for the Bank of the Southwest in Houston, Texas. Tamayo describes the symbolism of this monumental work, which measures 46 by 14 feet, as follows:

"The figure at the lower part of the composition represents America. It is surrounded by the Sea to represent its geographical situation.

"Because of its great proportions, this figure conveys the ideal of abundance, the main characteristic of our continent. Abundance is shown, too, by the fish, symbol of the wealth of the sea; by a plant, symbol of the richness of our land; an oil geyser, and a water spring, symbols of underground resources.

"In the upper part of the mural are two em-

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bracing figures, signifying the melting of America's two basic races, whose cultural contributions enrich her spiritually. The figure at the left, in white, is the white race, and next to it is the cross, symbol of occidental culture. The figure at the right, in brown, is the Indian race. Its cultural contribution is represented by the plumed serpent, or Quetzalcoatl, symbol of pre-Columbian culture.

"The great figure of America is painted in white and brown to indicate that in it the two races and two cultures mingled to make it great. The movement in this figure, and its expression of joy, mean activity, and the happiness resulting from spiritual and material wealth."

In the autumn of 1957 Tamayo completed a large-scale oil-on-canvas mural for installation in the library of the University of Puerto Rico, at Río Piedras. The work, which conveys more lyricism than power, is built around the theme of Prometheus and his life-giving fire.

Late the same year the artist left for France, where he has recently completed large-scale murals in Politec plastic materials, for the new UNESCO headquarters in Paris.

In a comprehensive study of Tamayo, the poet Octavio Paz makes the following statements:

"By grace of color, space vibrates, exists. But Tamayo does not conquer space through color; it is through his sense of composition. Born a colorist, he has succeeded in being served by his native gift—instead of being smothered in it—submitting it to the rigor of his composition. So it is impossible to speak of Tamayo as a simple colorist. His colors rest on structure and cannot be considered except as functions of a totality: the picture.

"Tamayo is a son of the earth and the sun. Infancy is alive in his work and his secret powers of exaltation are present in all of his canvases. In his first period he gave sensuality and freshness to tropical fruits, nocturnal guitars, women of the coast and of the plateau. Today, these qualities illumine his finest creations. His matter, at the same time concentrated and succulent, rich and severe, is made of the substance of that secret sun.

"If there is antiquity and innocence in the painting of Tamayo, it is because he is rooted in a people, in a present that is at the same time a dateless past."

Tamayo is represented, in the leading museums and private collections of the United States, Europe, Mexico and South America, with paintings and drawings. In September, 1960 he was awarded the "International Prize" at the Second Inter-American Biennial of Painting at the Palace of Fine Arts in Mexico City.

MANUEL RODRÍGUEZ LOZANO

The art of Manuel Rodríguez Lozano has functioned over the years somewhat—though less morbidly—in the role of the specter at a Mexican fiesta. Resisting all involvement in the propagandizing of political orders or the glorification of folkloric themes, his "purist" painting reminds the celebrants that in the midst of life there is Death, who is neither nationalistic in aim nor festive of mood.

Yet the canvases and murals of Rodríguez Lozano convey no suggestion of the macabre. His white-robed, unsmiling figures are profoundly human, though esoteric. As they start out on journeys that promise no return, they communicate sentiments of longing and loneliness and even undying love for the dear

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NEFERO. Portrait of Rodríguez Lozano.

ones left behind. Or, as they stand in silent, motionless contemplation of the brevity of life and its pleasures, they seem to be plunged in sorrow over man's unhappy fate. With a certain sense of healing, they even convey, too, sympathetic understanding of spiritual conflicts and emotional impasse.

Describing the painter's attitude, the Mexican critic Agustín Velasquez Chávez points out that Rodríguez Lozano "represents a current separated by its tendencies and goals from that of the majority of the Mexican artists. His work reveals no definite social philosophy and for him painting has no political content."

Nevertheless, Rodríguez Lozano, in our view, does not escape his Mexican heritage; he merely refines its plastic interpretation. From remote antiquity the Mexican masses have shown an inordinate concern with death and its imagery in both their ritualistic and popular arts. It was the great poet king, Netzahualcoyotl of Texcoco, who wrote: "Death is the permanent, Life the transient." Nor has Rodríguez Lozano, despite his asceticism, isolated himself from Mexico's artistic development. His valuable contributions are seen in the disciplines he transmitted to his many pupils between 1922 and 1929, when he gathered around him a group of talented young men, notably the late Abraham Angel and Julio Castellanos. With brilliant results, he continues to the present to pass on techniques acquired in Paris. Among his most gifted pupils in recent years has been Nefero, one of Mexico's outstanding portrait painters.

Born in Mexico in 1896, Rodríguez Lozano left the capital, as a youth, to study abroad. He traveled extensively in Europe and in the Americas, holding exhibitions in Buenos Aires, La Plata and New York and winning laudatory reviews from such astute critics as Salmon, Prebisch, Warnod and Enrique Ureña. Upon his return to Mexico, which preceded that of Siqueiros and Rivera, he voiced his opposition to the enormous murals of social content with which, he said, his fellow artists "were monopolizing the public walls."

In 1933 he submitted an example of his own approach to muralism in the Isabela Católica residence of Francisco Sergio Iturbe, an aristocratic art lover and collector of old master drawings. Completed in that year, the work embraced sixteen panels in subdued colors—brown, rose and blue—and has been described as a "sole decoration wherein the constant theme is Death." According to Velasquez Chávez, the human figures of this mural "speak of the pain of life, its beginning and end, and the emotions of the human spirit in the presence of Death. There is symbolism in the deserted rooms and symbolism in the conception and forms—the horizontal line, Death, in conflict with the vertical line, Life."

On the issue of folklorism in painting and the commercially motivated mingling of

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RODRÍGUEZ LOZANO. "La Piedad en el Desierto," mural, Old Penitentiary of Lecumberri.

the fine and popular arts, Rodríguez Lozano was not the only rebel in the ranks of the Mexican muralists. On one of our visits to the artist's multiroomed studio on Puente Alvarado, he showed us a letter dated February 14, 1928, written to him from New York by José Clemente Orozco. In his large, characteristically forceful handwriting, the maestro bitterly

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RODRÍGUEZ LOZANO. Detail from "La Piedad en el Desierto," mural, Old Penitentiary of Lecumberri.

complains to his friend Manuel—who had steadfastly remained aloof from the lucrative tourist enterprise of exploiting "Mexico, the Picturesque"—about the *"soberana plancha"* ("the supreme deception") in the group exhibition of Mexican painters at the Art Center during the 1927-28 holiday season. The event, Orozco reported, "has left Mexico in *el mas completo ridiculo.*" He states that the largest paintings, regardless of their inferior quality or the inexperience of the artist, were given preference as to location, and these, "together with unfortunate little wax figures and dressed fleas in small glass cases, were the first things that greeted the public. How does it strike you, Manuel," Orozco asks his friend, "that the pictures of Pacheco are represented here as the best Mexican painting and the dressed fleas as sculpture?" And, with a rising tempo of outrage, he adds: "Do you know, Manuel, what they plan to do to us next? It is this: After the exhibition of 'Mexican Painting and Sculpture,' they are going to follow it up with another of the 'Minor Arts,'—jars, *petates,*

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RODRIGUEZ LOZANO. "The Farewell," oil.

pirinolas, sarapes, etc. of which they have already sold many and will sell more at very good prices. That is to say, our works have merely served as propaganda placards for a completely private business of foreigners. In other words, we are the clown—*payaso*—announcing the circus, an instrument being used to call public attention to the affair. Do you not think Manuel that it is time that we speak the truth and defend ourselves? For the moment, I implore you and the friends to see that no other 'exposition' of this kind leaves

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Mexico for any reason whatsoever."

Like most of Mexico's leading artists, Rodríguez Lozano taught at the Esmeralda School of Painting and Sculpture. His works have been shown in group and one-man shows in many lands and several of his masterpieces are on permanent display at the National Institute of Fine Arts. Many others are included in distinguished private collections in Mexico, the United States, Latin America and Europe.

In 1954, chagrined because he felt that he had not been awarded wall space equal to that of the artists of the "Revolutionary and Folkloric Schools" in the 3,000-year Survey of Mexican Art, Rodríguez Lozano rented an enormous vacant store on Avenida Madero and invited the public to view the creation of his entire career. The following year, 1955, a government-sponsored exhibition of his complete works was held in the Galería de Artes Plásticas.

On this occasion the Spanish poet-critic José Bergamin wrote of him:

"Rodríguez Lozano is a mystic enamored of his people, of his country, which he interprets so admirably. . . . The passion that burns in him is not a vague dream woven of confusion, of nostalgia for the distant past, full of obscure hopes."

Recently interviewed by Max Herrera Nuñez, Rodríguez Lozano, who has frequently been accused of metaphysical trends, made the following scathing comments on what he calls the "officially fathered passing vogue of abstractionism."

"The National Institute of Fine Arts is allowing abstractionism to be entered in the forthcoming Biennial. But you know what I think of abstractionism, and you may write that 'abstractionists are a lot of eunuchs.' Only man—the genius—is able to master a medium in order to express himself. Those who copy the style are eunuchs. They believe that with consciousness and progress humanity can be changed. No, gentlemen. We have had, will have, and continue to have the same humanity here, in Russia and every other part of the world—money lenders and fops, exploiters and the exploited, public servants, depraved beings and white slave traders. Men will always be men. With all their discoveries, they will continue to cling to their vices and virtues. The painting of those who follow abstractionism has lost all the positive or negative qualities that I have enumerated, but the abstractionists hold to the idea of a changing humanity through modern rationalism, and above all, through the power of money."

JUAN O'GORMAN

Intellectual Juan O'Gorman is one of the most versatile figures of contemporary Mexican art. Architect, painter, skilled craftsman, socially conscious writer, brilliant conversationalist and a man who delights in creating ideal human societies for the occupancy of his strikingly original, plastically integrated houses, O'Gorman combines in his many-faceted personality the genius of two imaginative races. He was born in Coyoacán, D.F. in 1905 of a Mexican mother, Encarnación O'Gorman de O'Gorman, and an Irish father, Cecil O'Gorman, a mining engineer. When he was three years old the family moved to Guanajuato, where they remained until he was seven. In 1912 they took up residence in San Angel, D.F. The boy went to the Preparatory School of Maristas and Jesuits of Veronica and, hav-

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O'GORMAN. Self-portrait, oil.

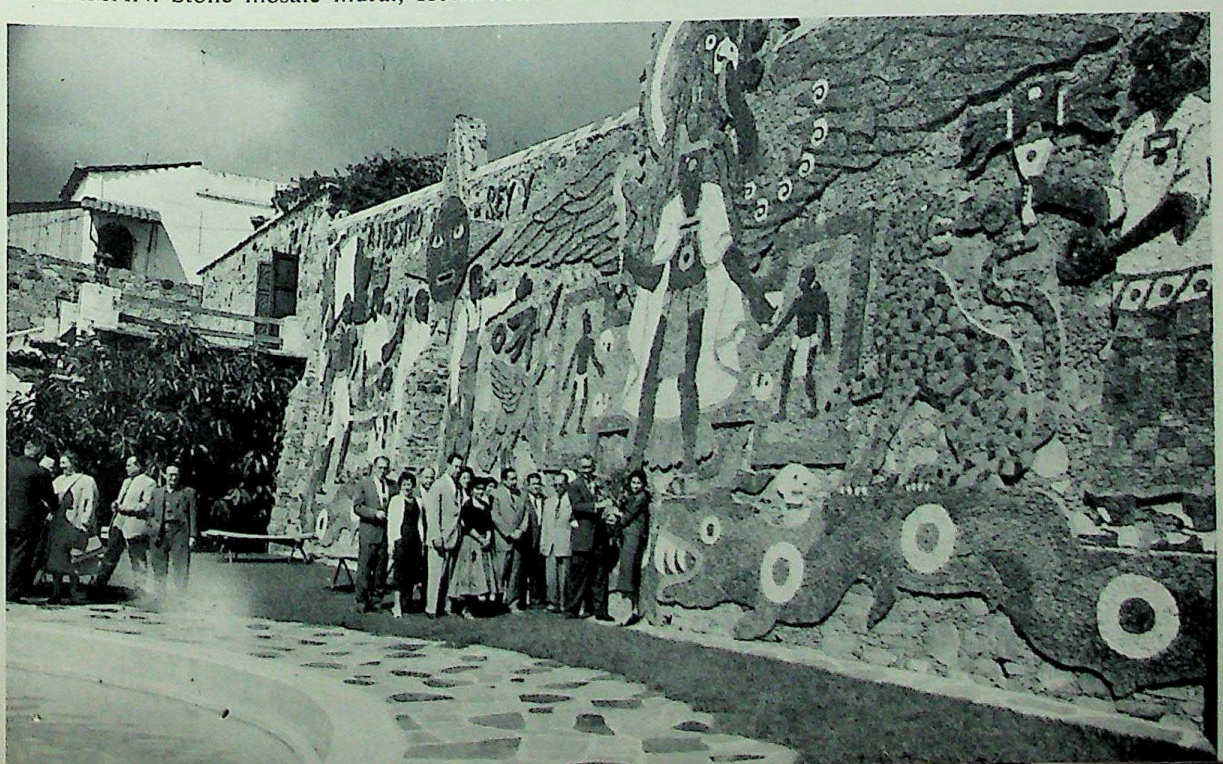
ing decided to become an architect, began the required studies at the National University of Mexico.

He started to work as an architect in 1927, building individual homes, and in 1930 he built the studio of Diego Rivera in front of San Angel Inn. Between 1932 and 1935 he was head of the Department of Building Construction at the Ministry of Public Education, and in this period he designed the schools erected by the Department of the Federal District. These were the first applications of functional architecture in Mexico.

In 1937 he painted three murals in the Central Airport of Mexico City, two of which were destroyed because of their anti-Fascist content. The third mural may be seen in the Mural Salon of the Palace of Fine Arts. In 1940 he painted an *al fresco* mural in the Gertrudis Bocanegra Library in Pátzcuaro, Michoacán, formerly the old church of San Augustine. This impressive work, measuring 14 meters in height, portrays with a wealth of lyrically integrated detail the history of Michoacán.

Between 1937 and 1950 he devoted much of his creative effort to easel painting, but in 1950, with the architects Gustavo Saavedra and Juan M. de Velasco, he designed and carried out the construction of the University of Mexico Library. In 1951 he designed the

O'GORMAN. Stone mosaic mural, Hotel Posado de la Mision, Taxco.



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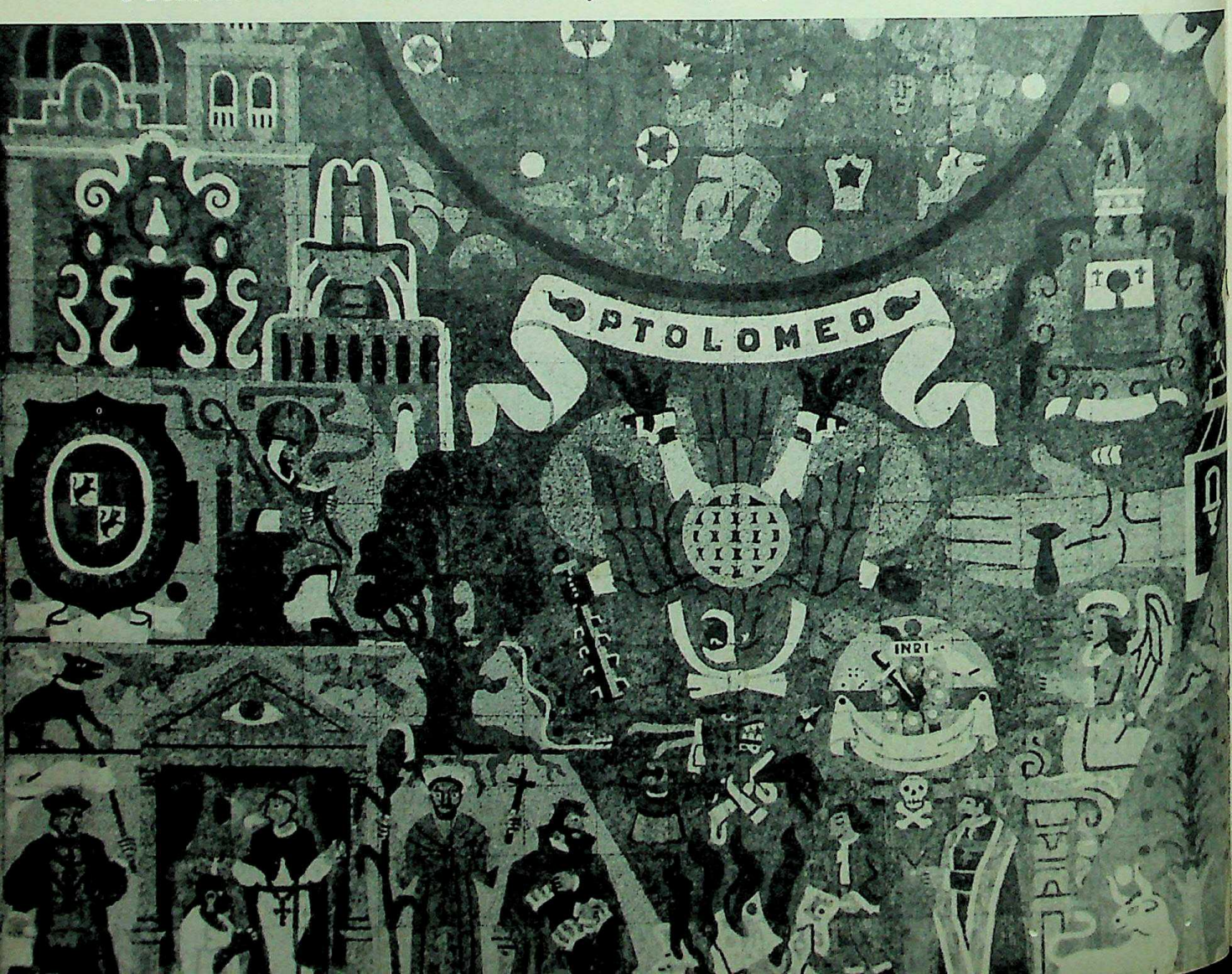
stone mosaic decoration of its façades. Shortly thereafter, in 1952, he created a huge mosaic design on an outer wall of the Government Communications Building, known as SCOP.

In 1956 he designed mosaics for the Posada de la Misión Hotel in Taxco, Guerrero. The theme is Cuauhtémoc, last king of the Aztecs and heroic defender of his people against the Spanish invaders. The central figure is this Hero, above whose head appears the Sun, symbolic of the Universe, surmounted by the Eagle, national emblem of Mexico. The mural follows the ancient division of Day and Night, a mystery of Nature so highly significant in pre-Columbian times. To the right of Cuauhtémoc are the Tiger and Moon, images of Darkness, and various figures recalling the memory of Mexico's pre-Hispanic past. To the left, on the side of a brilliant Day, are the Heron and the Sun, signifying Hope and Light, and typical figures representing the Mexico of today, its independence and its golden promise for the future.

From 1950 up to the present time, he has been working on a house that he constructed on the lava beds of the Pedregal in San Angel. This structure represents the application of the organic thesis of Mexican architecture, as opposed to the modernistic architecture of a so-called international style that has become the fashion.

O'Gorman has recently executed one of the

O'GORMAN. Detail of stone mosaic, Library, University City.



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SIQUEIROS. "Hazards of Labor," Social Security Hospital Number One, Mexico, D.F.

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TAMAYO. "Watermelon Slices."

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most lyrical works of his career—a fresco mural, 50 by 15 feet, on a curved wall of his own design at Chapultepec Castle, now the Museum of History. This mural, dominating the Sala de la Independencia, depicts conditions in Mexico during the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries—that is, the last years of the Spanish Colonial regime and the birth of the Republic. He says that the title might well be: "Birth of our Independence and of our Nationality."

The artist's wife is Helen O'Gorman, well known as a talented painter of Mexican plants and flowers. O'Gorman himself is the executive secretary of the recently organized Union of Painters, Sculptors and Engravers of Mexico.

In a recently published booklet entitled *The National University of Mexico,* by Alma M. Reed, Juan O'Gorman has graphically described what is his most famous work, the mosaic decoration on the façade of the National University Library. His words, illustrating so well the Mexican artist's treatment of his traditional heritage, are quoted below:

"In its totality, this decoration represents three fundamental historic phases of culture in Mexico: the pre-Hispanic epoch, the most ancient and the only true American phase; the Spanish Colonial epoch or the Intervention of Europe in America; the Modern Era, as a result of the preceding two.

"The American culture of Anahuac is portrayed on the North wall. Above, in the central axis, is seen the sun, the most ancient symbol of matter in formation and the source of all the life that exists on the earth. Immediately below is a symbolical representation of Day and Night—white and black—with the symbols of the Aztec astronomical system. In the lowest section is seen the Mexican Eagle, symbol of the foundation of Tenochtitlán, and above it, the emblem of Mexico.

"In the upper section, at the right of the central sun, are the terrible Aztec deities, Tezcatlipoca and Chalchihuitlicue. At the left of this same sun are the beneficent deities,

O'GORMAN at work on fresco, "Independence," Museum of History, Castle of Chapultepec.

Quetzalcoatl and Tlaloc. The great double figure at the right of the eagle is a representation of the concept of Time, of the contradiction between present and future. This figure also expresses the dynamic and active forces in the cosmogenic theories of the ancient Mexican world. At the left of the central eagle is another large figure representing the concept of Eternity, of the stability and fecundity of Nature and of Matter. The two opposing concepts establish duality and complete the pre-Hispanic thought on the cosmos. The two figures hold other symbolic significance. The first represents struggle, anguish, pain and anger. The second, happiness, creation and pleasure.

"The lower section depicts the pre-Hispanic world. At the right are the warriors and the chiefs; at the left, the agriculturists and the craftsmen.

"The blue bands that link the entire composition represent the canals of water in Te-

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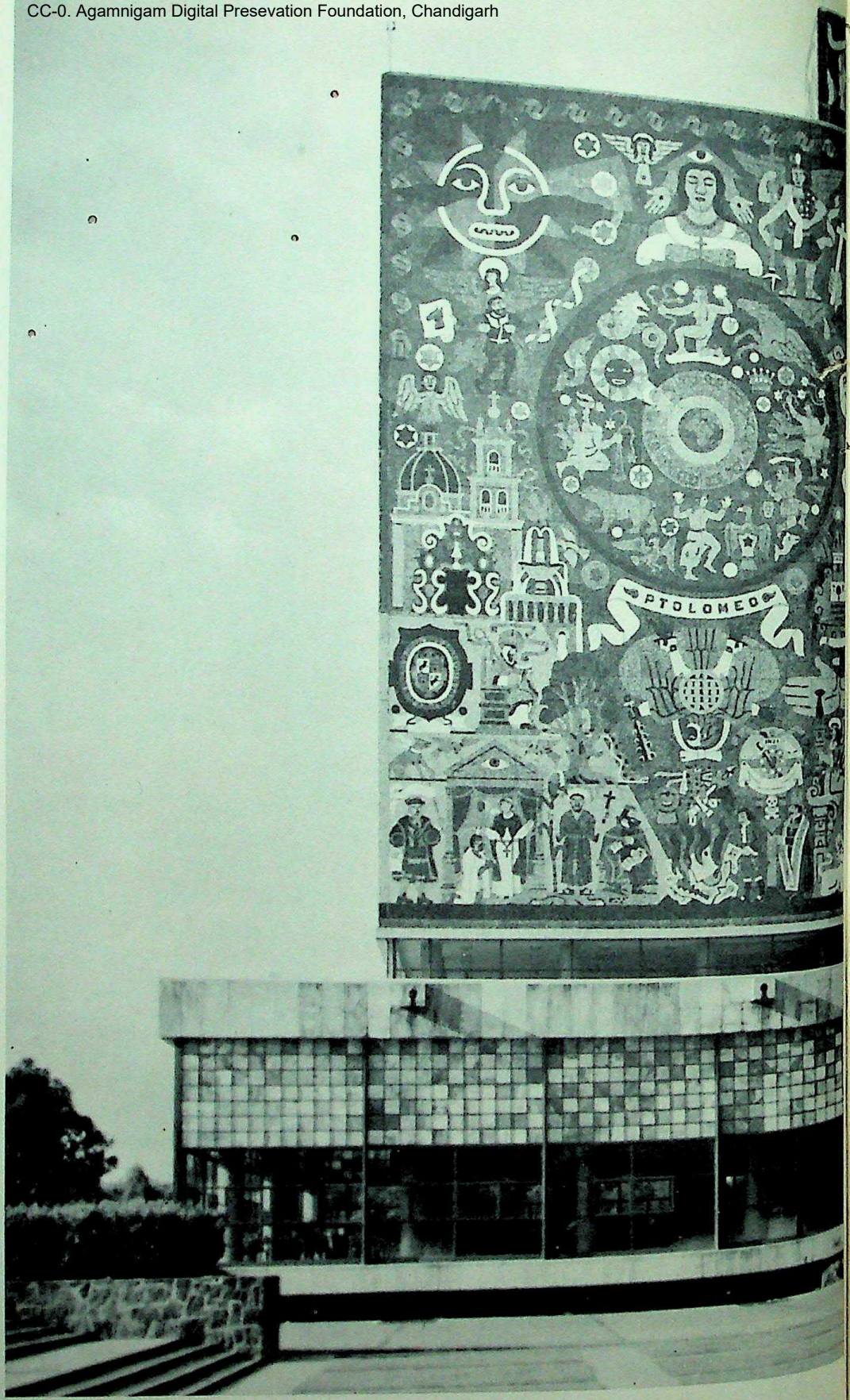

O'GORMAN. Mosaic, Library, University City.

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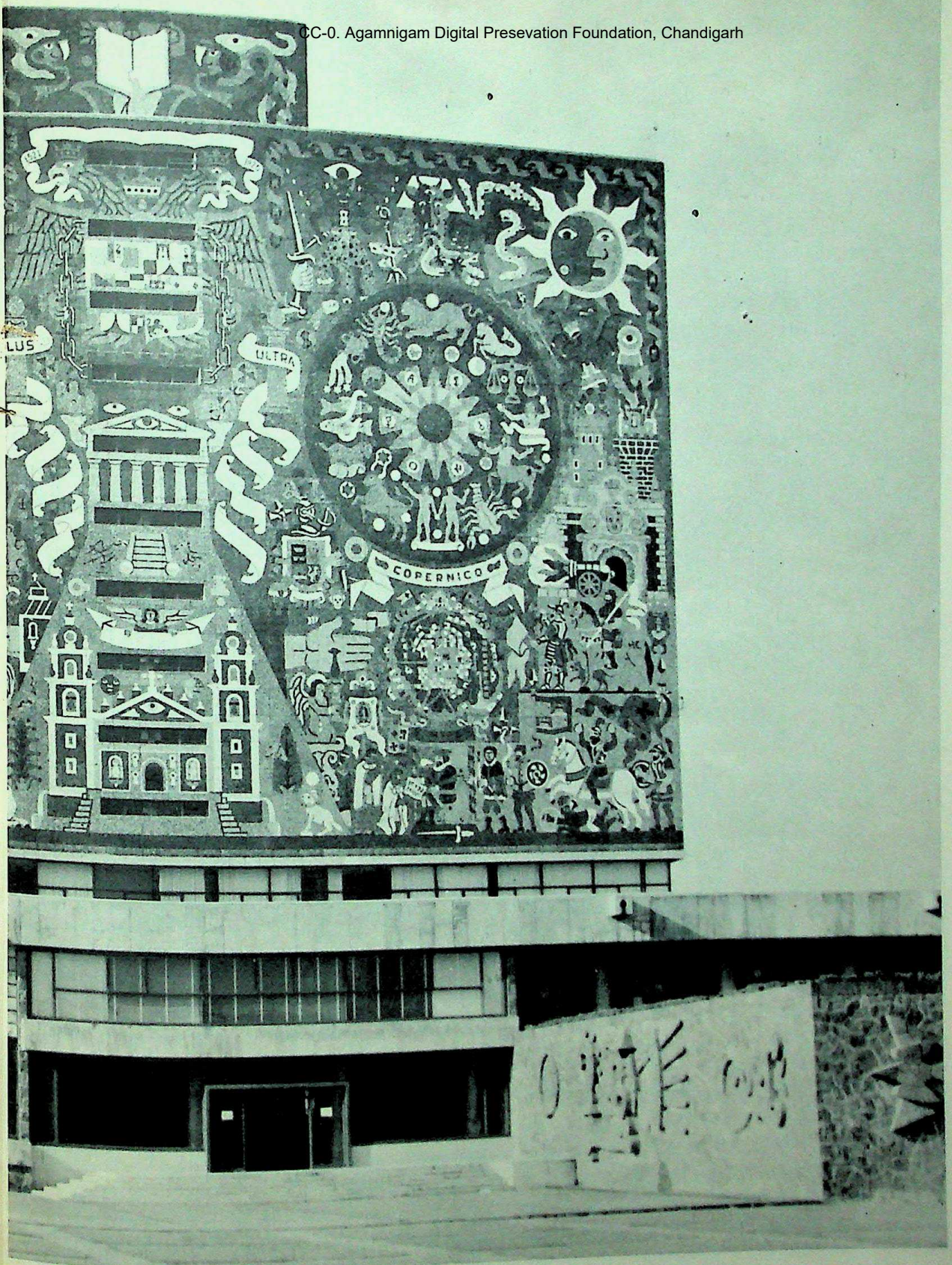

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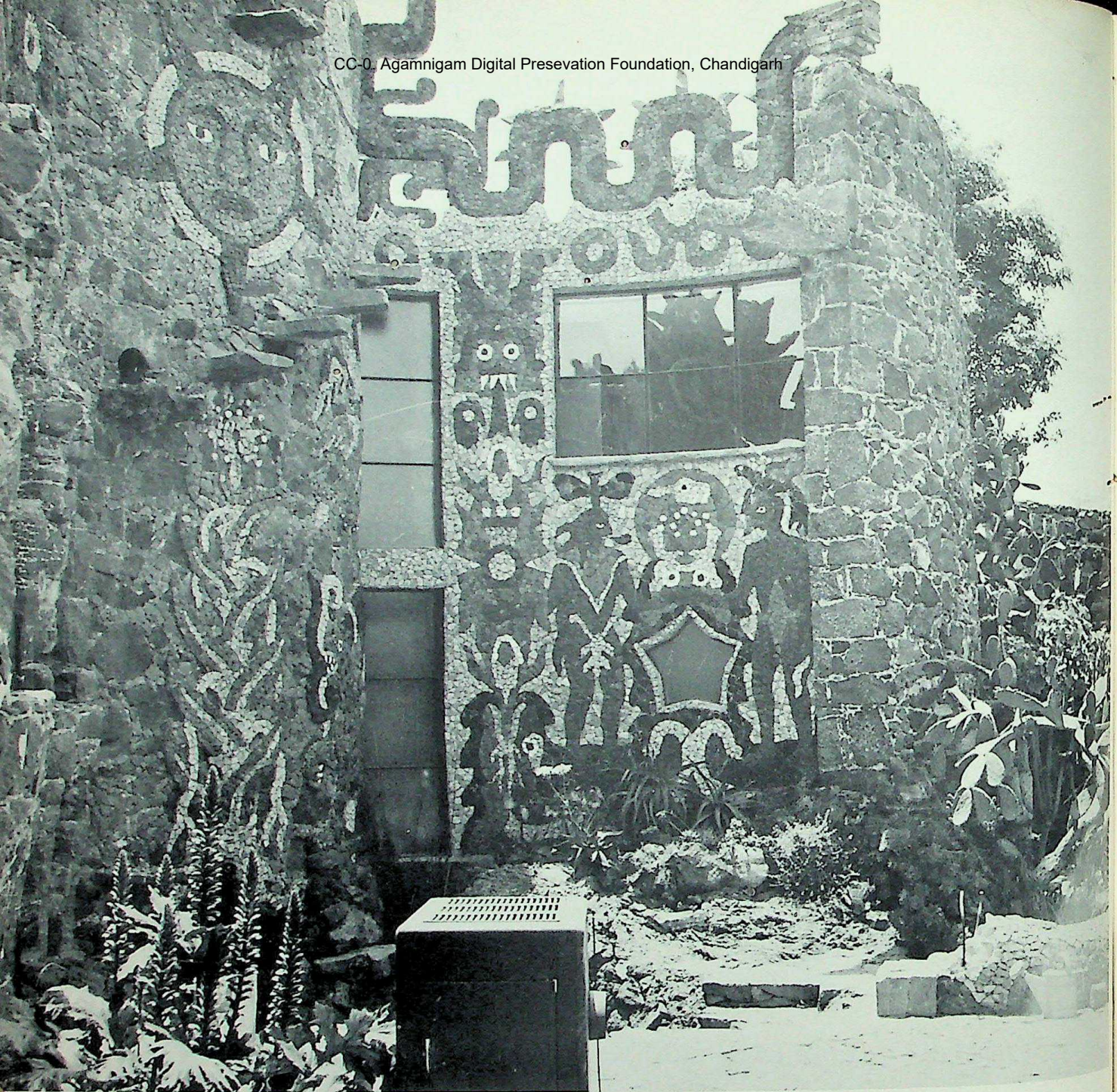

Mosaic wall in O'Gorman's residence, Pedregal, Mexico City.

nochtitlán that lead to the towns of Coyoacán, Ixtapalapa, Tacuba, Tlaltelolco, Xochimilco and Tláhuac. Seated figures of the principal Aztec monarchs of the ancient, as well as of the new empire surround the central eagle. Above, two quetzalcoatls, symbols of ancient Mexico, complete the composition."

He goes on to describe the Spanish Colonial occupation that covers the South wall, concluding: ". . . over the entire wall have been established the fundamentals of Spanish thought in the Colonial epoch—the contradiction between Good and Evil as the base of all the culture of this period. In the lower section, the Spanish Colonial world at war. At the left, the Colonial religious world and the evan-

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gelization of the Indians. The two great hands represent the Christian redemption. Immediately above, are placed the shields—at the right, that of Cortes, and at the left, that of Bishop Zumarraga.

"Modern culture," he states, "is depicted on the West wall." Emblems of libraries and universities are shown. At the left side European influence is represented. At the right is portrayed the Mexican-Indian influence in present-day Mexico.

"Another aspect of modern Mexican culture is interpreted on the East wall. At the upper center, the reborn Cuauhtémoc is seen as a symbol of the authentic Mexican nationality based on its ancient tradition, above the colors of the National flag. The sun and moon beside the figure of Cuauhtémoc indicate that which forms the high standard of aspiration of the Mexican people. Beneath Cuauhtémoc is a representation of the atom, which is the actual concept of the constitution of matter and energy in the microcosm. Above this same axis in the lower section, the fire expresses the passion and the struggle, over which are seen the fruits of effort and work.

"At the right of the side in which the wall forms a corner with that of the Colonial epoch, are shown the workers and the Industrial Revolution to indicate European influence in the culture of contemporary Mexico. At the left, the *campesinos,* and the agrarian revolts, under the banner of 'Land and Liberty,' are shown on the same side as the pre-Hispanic epoch, to indicate the Mexican Indian influence."

JORGE GONZÁLEZ CAMARENA

The art of Jorge González Camarena, who was born in Guadalajara, Jalisco in 1908, has described the full circle of aesthetic expression to return in the latest phase to its original creative impulse. Since the late twenties González Camarena has been recognized as a leading muralist of the "middle generation," working expertly in all media—fresco, oil on special fabrics, tempera, mosaic and polychromed ceramic. But in March, 1960 he was commissioned by the National Institute of Fine Arts to execute the main sculptural group for the Independence Monument at Dolores Hidalgo in Guanajuato.

The figures, twenty meters in height, surround a columnar structure commemorating the 150th Anniversary of Mexican Independence at the site where, from the belfry of his parish church, on September 15, 1810, Miguel Hidalgo first proclaimed Mexico's freedom from Spanish rule. The architectural features of the monument were provided by Carlos Obregón Santacilia and the project, jointly submitted by the two designers, was selected from among numerous entries in a national competition.

This recalls the earliest plastic directions of González Camarena. Before his seventh year, he was not only making series of drawings to record his adventures but carving *ujales*—stones that abounded in Guadalajara and to which he gave the form of miniature monuments. One, honoring Padre Hidalgo, was composed of a number of carved stones. In the rainy season, when it is the custom of Guadalajara families to move to San Pedro Tlaquepaque, the young Jorge devoted himself to modeling figures in clay, which he fired in a small oven he had built in the orchard of his home.

In 1918, when the González family moved to Mexico City, he continued his primary

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course at the Alberto Correa School, where the drawing teacher, Professor Zenteno, induced him to enter the National Academy of Fine Arts. On the completion of his primary studies he entered Preparatory School and the Academy of Bellas Artes, simultaneously attending the classes of Don Mateo Herrera. Despite the opposition of his family, who had destined him for the law or medicine, the young student dedicated himself more and more to art. He attended classes in the Academy, in which modern painting tendencies prevailed. He was selected by Dr. Atl from among the students of this group to color the plates of an edition of *The Churches of Mexico,* edited by the veteran painter-author. In 1928 González Camarena, with his companion Alfredo Valez, initiated a movement among the Academy students to make Diego Rivera director of the institution, with a view to ending the Academy's antiquated teaching methods.

In the first important competition in painting held after the Revolution, under the sponsorship of Tolteca Cement and initiated by Federico Sánchez Fogarty, González Camarena shared in the second and third prize with Tamayo and María Izquierdo. In 1932 he was commissioned by Jorge Enciso, Director of the Department of Colonial and Historic Monuments, to restore the recently discovered sixteenth-century frescoes of the ex-Convent of Huexotzingo, Puebla, a project that occupied him for nearly two years, during which he lived the life of the pueblo, even becoming a member of a native orchestra that played pre-Hispanic instruments. As a result of his study of the frescoes, which had been covered for centuries with various layers of painting and lime, he concluded after minute investigation that the author of the work titled, "La Virgin de la Latania" was the same who had painted the nationally venerated "Virgin de Guadalupe" at the shrine of Tepeyac, probably Marcos Cipactli. His findings were published at the time on the front page of *El Nacional* and in the magazine *Futuro.* Also while at Huexotzingo, he dedicated himself to the study of Mexican mythology and witchcraft, for his own enlightenment and for future works.

In order to support his family, following his marriage to Jeannie Barre d'Saint Leu in 1934, González Camarena painted pictures for the use of industry, and for several years he produced paintings destined for calendars and other publications of the Cruz Azul Cement Factory. He was able to extricate himself from commercial art in 1940 through the success that attended the execution of a small fresco in the Hotel Fundición in Zimapán, Hidalgo, for Francisco Cornejo.

This work came to the attention of Arq. Carlos Obregón Santacilia, who was so favorably impressed that he entrusted González Camarena with new murals in the Guardiola Building, a work in which the artist first used his oil and wax process. The members of the Bankers Club, occupying the top floor of the edifice, tried unsuccessfully to have the mural destroyed because of its theme. The publicity given this work called attention to González Camarena's distinctive talents and opened up to him new possibilities.

Soon after, he founded the course of painting at the Universidad Femenina, and in swift succession he painted several murals. Among the first was "Germinación," for Arq. Obregón Santacilia, at Venustiano Carranza No. 52, and in 1945 a triptych for the Mercantile Bank titled "Industry, Banking and Commerce." The same year, the artist executed a monumental Christ for the Church of La Purísima, in Monterrey, Nuevo León, for Arq. Enrique de la Mora. In 1946 he painted the small mural, "Eruption of Xitle," for the Cuicuilco Museum.

In 1950 González Camarena realized a major work in the central structure of the Social Security building. At the entrance he executed sculptural panels, and in the interior the mural "Mexico," interpreting the liquida-

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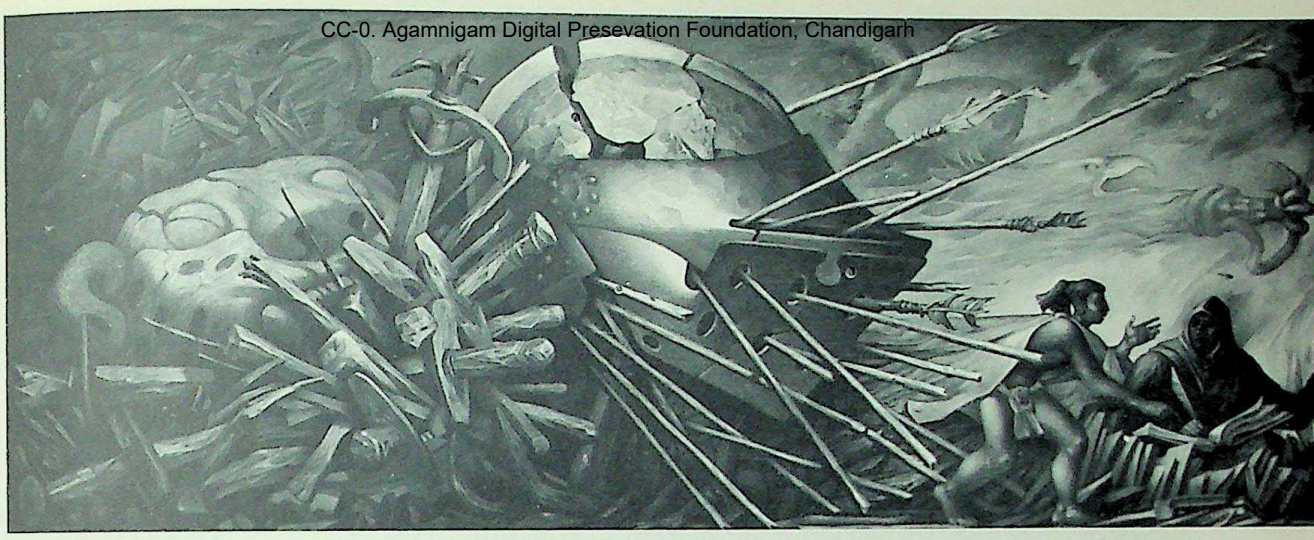

GONZÁLEZ CAMARENA. "History of Mexico," detail from mural, Institute of Technology, Monterrey.

GONZÁLEZ CAMARENA. Head of the martyr Dr. Belsario Dominguez, detail of mural in Mexican Senate Building.

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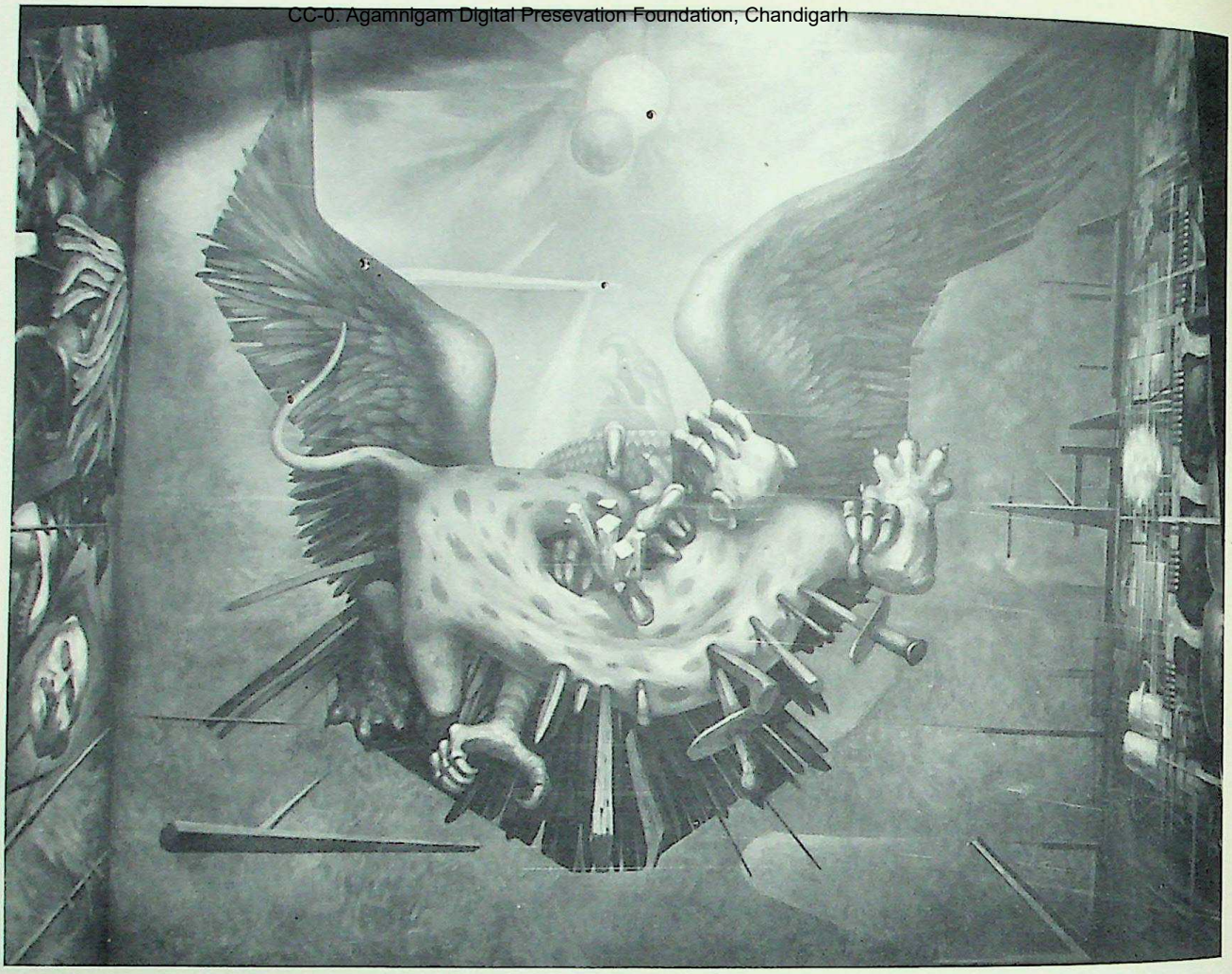

GONZÁLEZ CAMARENA. Mural, oil on special fabric, Mexican Senate Building.

GONZÁLEZ CAMARENA before his mural "Belsario Dominguez," oil on special fabric, Mexican Senate Building.

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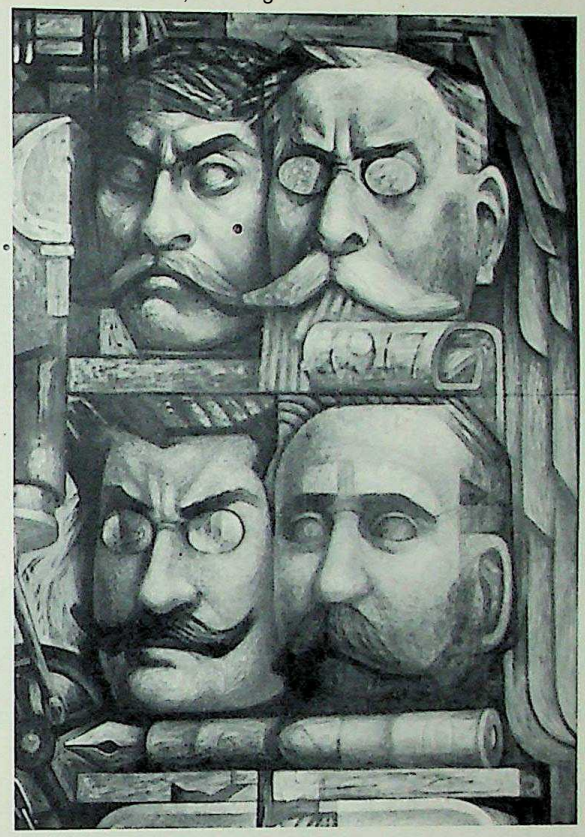
tion of both *Hispanismo* and *Indigenismo* and the resurgence of an exclusively Mexican nationality. He was invited by the architect Augusto Perez Palacios to decorate the Olympic Stadium at University City, but, because of a prolonged illness that required a year's hospitalization, he could not accept. Upon his recovery he executed a sculptural decoration for the Children's Shelter Building, designed by Arq. de la Mora, on La Avenida del Obrero Mundial.

In 1953 González Camarena decorated the Bank of Mexico in Veracruz, painting an area covering 250 square meters on the under surface of the architrave, the largest work of its kind in the Republic. The theme is the progress of labor and the national production, symbolized by an eagle in flight. During this period he initiated the movement for the restoration of the Spanish fortress-castle, San Juan de Ulùa, upon which industry was encroaching and hastening deterioration. "The Submerged City," one of the artist's most famous canvases, was painted during this period.

In 1954 he executed a bas-relief in stone of 300 square meters for the Library of the Technological Institute of Monterrey, a work polychromed with applications of ceramic, mosaic and painting *al hule,* representing the elements of Mexican mythology, and titled "The Triumph of Culture." In the interior of the same building he executed two murals in mosaic and a mural painting, the latter titled, "The Quixote of Monterrey." The mural "Life and Industry" was painted for Ing. Francisco Gomez in 1956.

In August, 1957 the artist completed the decoration of the walls and vault above the grand staircase of the Chamber of Senators. The work, covering a surface area of 250 square meters and commemorating the martyrdom of the *patricio,* Senator Belsario Dominguez, who defied the despotic Huerta and publicly denounced him in the Senate, is generally regarded as the artist's finest mural achievement to date. It is painted in oil on a special fabric and on demountable frames, so that it may be moved and installed in the proposed new Senate building.



GONZÁLEZ CAMARENA. Detail from mural in Mexican Senate Building. *(Upper left* Zapata; *upper right* Carranza; *lower left* Flores Magon; *lower right* Madero.)

The earthquake of July 28, 1957 in the Mexican capital damaged the Guardiola building where, two decades earlier, González Camarena had decorated the top-floor dining room of the Bankers Club. The necessary repairs provided a pretext for the destruction of the mural, to which the Bankers Club still objected because of its criticism of the capitalist system's practices. Vigorous protests and wide publicity resulted in a commission to the artist to repaint the mural.

Recently González Camarena was the fifth to join the famous muralists at the Bellas Artes. On the third floor, between works of

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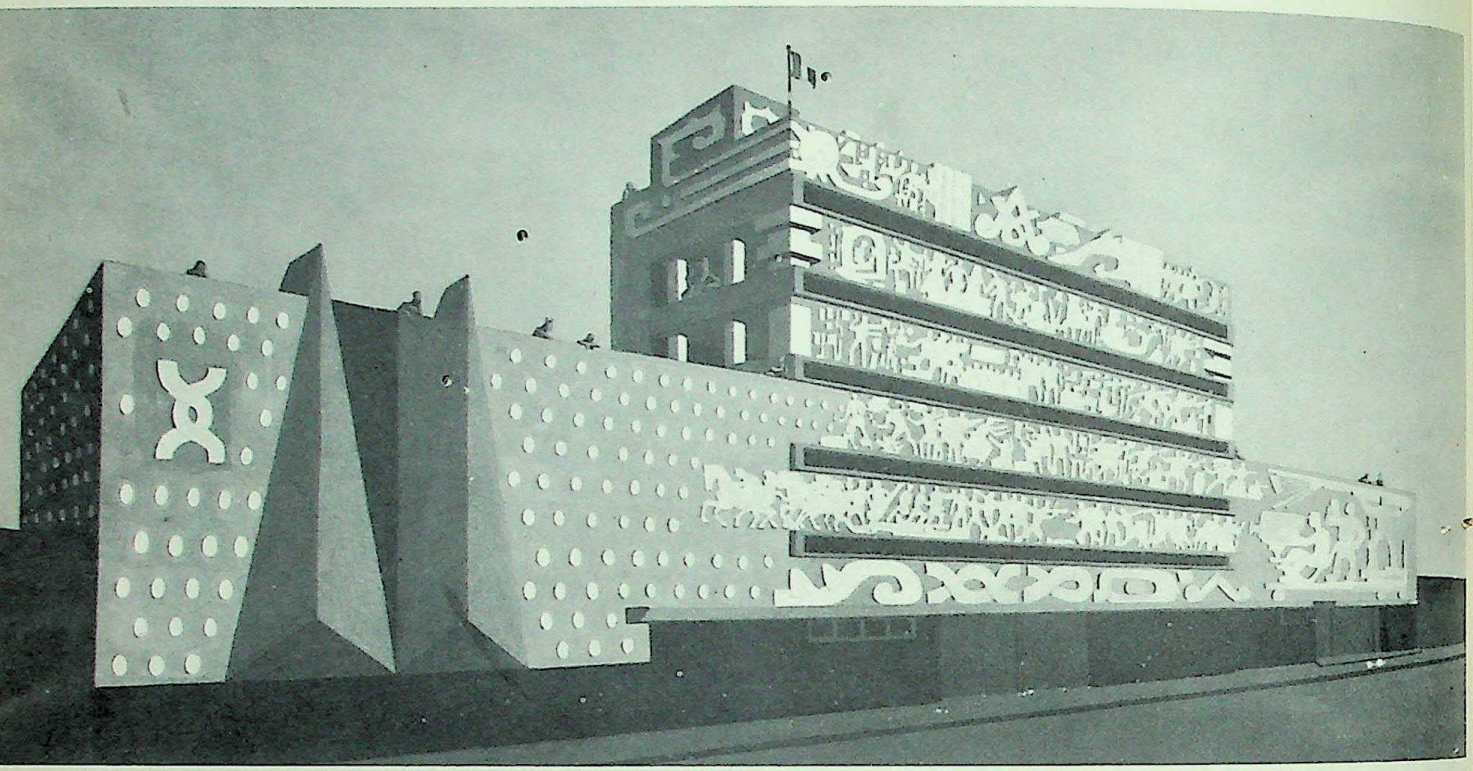

GONZÁLEZ CAMARENA. Mural decorations on façade of Televicentro building, Mexico City.

Diego Rivera and Siqueiros, in a space of 45 square meters broken by two building columns, he developed the theme of the rebellion of humanity against misery—misery of the spirit, mind, soul and heart.

Among the artist's latest works is a large mosaic mural in the Social Security building of Chihuahua, Chihuahua. Another small mosaic mural was executed in 1959 for the Phillips building in Monterrey.

In the spring of 1960 González Camarena worked on a mural in Chapultepec Castle, recently converted into the Chapultepec Museum. Titled "Shock and Fusion of Europe and America" and measuring 25 square meters, the painting interprets the struggle between a Spanish Conqueror and an Aztec warrior, fighting to the death on the body of a horse fallen in battle.

González Camarena reopens long-closed aesthetic trails in the enormous mural that covers the entire façade of the new Televicentro building. This striking décor, an experiment in integrated plastic, aims to combine and integrate the architectural, sculptural and pictorial elements involved. The project has utilized many motifs derived from ancient Meso-American and popular Mexican art.

RAÚL ANGUIANO

A vigorous advocate and an able practitioner of the "explicit" aesthetic attitude is Raúl Anguiano, born in Guadalajara, Jalisco in 1915. Through the press and radio, he has

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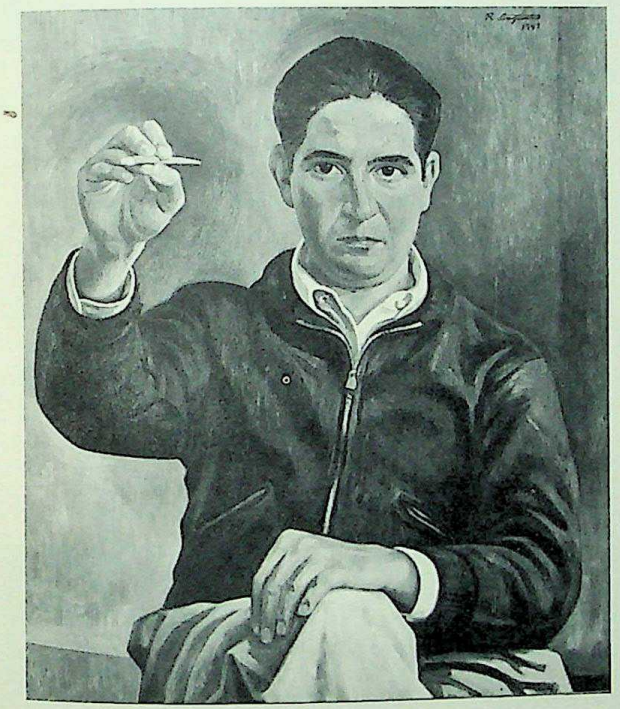
long been one of the most articulate advocates of an art that does not attempt, as he puts it, "to outlaw humanity" by eliminating or parodying man and all his works. In recent years, he has become the spokesman for a large group of painters who hold that Mexican art should continue to concern itself with those values that first established its national, and,



ANGUIANO in his studio, self-portrait, oil.

at the same time, universal character—namely expressive force, human roots and a general tendency towards neo-realism. A prolific producer of oil and water-color paintings, lithographs and drawings, Anguiano has executed a few distinguished murals that give promise of important future creation in this field.

While still a student in the Preparatory School, Anguiano displayed a marked talent for drawing the human figure. In 1923 he entered the Free School of Painting, sponsored by the Museum of Guadalajara.

ANGUIANO. "The Three Suns," oil.

His work was first exhibited in a group show in 1928. Later he organized his co-exhibitors and founded the Young Painters of Jalisco. When Anguiano moved to Mexico City in 1934 he studied mural technique, and with several young painters, including Jesús Guerrero Galván and Máximo Pacheco, he decorated several school buildings. A series of one-man shows began in 1935, and in 1936 he painted a fresco mural at the Centro Escolar de Revolución.

In 1938 he was sent with Xavier Guerrero to Cuba with an exhibition of Mexican paintings. On this trip he visited the United States, where, for several months, he studied at the Art Students League of New York. Earlier, in 1935, he had become a supervisor of draw-

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ANGUIANO. "Corn in the Mexican Revolution," Guadalajara.

ing teachers in the public schools of Mexico City, and in 1940-41, he taught drawing at The Esmeralda School of Painting and Sculpture.

One of his paintings, shown in the National Exhibition of 1946, was purchased by the Ministry of National Property, founded by President Miguel Alemán.

A one-man show, which received high acclaim, was held in the Salon de Plástica Mexicana in 1950. The drawings and paintings he had done of the Lacandons, and which he exhibited on this occasion, were the result of a visit to Chiapas, when he had accompanied a National Institute of Fine Arts expedition to study and copy in color the extraordinary

ANGUIANO. Detail from mural "The Evolution of Commerce in Mexico."

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ANGUIANO. "The Evolution of Commerce in Mexico," oil on mesonite, Chamber of Commerce.

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fresco murals of Bonampak. The trip had required a two-day journey by mule into the jungle from the isolated spot where the chartered plane landed. Anguiano made sketches of the segment of the Mayan race, who live in isolation and retain their primitive customs and ancient forms of worship. Their language is understood by only 250 persons—the members of their own tribe.

Anguiano is well known for his brilliant portraits, principally of women.

His most important mural, "The Story of Mexican Labor and Commerce," was painted in 1956 for the Mexican Chamber of Commerce on Paseo de la Reforma. The two large panels, adorning both sides of the main entrance, depict the development of arts and crafts among the ancient Maya and the application of modern methods to Mexico's present industrial and commercial progress. For durability, the painter used oils on mesonite. He states that *al fresco* painting directly on the wall is subject to damage—for one thing, through the gradual sinking of buildings. The dimensions of this mural are 5 by 4 meters.

Anguiano lives in Mexico City with his Spanish wife and their son and daughter. He has been a member of organizations of artists —of Taller de Gráfica Popular, of the Sociedad Propulsora de las Artes Plásticas, and now of the new Union de Pintores, Escultores y Grabadores de Mexico. At intervals, since his first assignment there in 1940, he has taught drawing at the Esmeralda School of Painting and Sculpture and, of late years, has been a member of the faculty.

FRANCISCO EPPENS HELGUERA

A mural in Mexican stone mosaic by Francisco Eppens adorns the elevated western wall of the National School of Medicine. Its subject is Life. Death, symbolized by red circles; Tlaloc, Aztec god of Rain; and the Mayan suns, symbolizing Fire, are also represented. Man and procreation form the central theme. The ancestral heritage of modern Mexico is indicated by a triple-faced mask: The Spaniard, as Father, is shown on the right; the native woman as Mother, on the left; the full face is that of a Mexican *mestizo,* representing the Son.

Of his work the painter states: "Our first attempt at plastic interpretation was made at University City. If we did not obtain a definite result, it was, in any event, an important experiment since we attacked the problem of exterior murals . . . a new road has been opened for the Mexican painter."

Another stone mosaic by Eppens, interpreting the elements of the Mexican national shield, the eagle and the serpent, appears on an extension in front of the Dentistry building, facing on the Esplanade, the general public's favorite spot in University City. Here, on the spacious, tree-shaded lawns, family groups assemble on Sunday mornings during the season to enjoy concerts presented by the University Orchestra from the bandstand at the west entrance to the National School of Medicine.

The son of Mexican parents, with a Swiss paternal grandfather from whom he received the name of Eppens, the artist was born in San Luis Potosí on February 1, 1913. When he was seven years old the family changed its residence to Mexico City. In 1927, on the completion of his Preparatory School studies, he entered the San Carlos Academy, remain-

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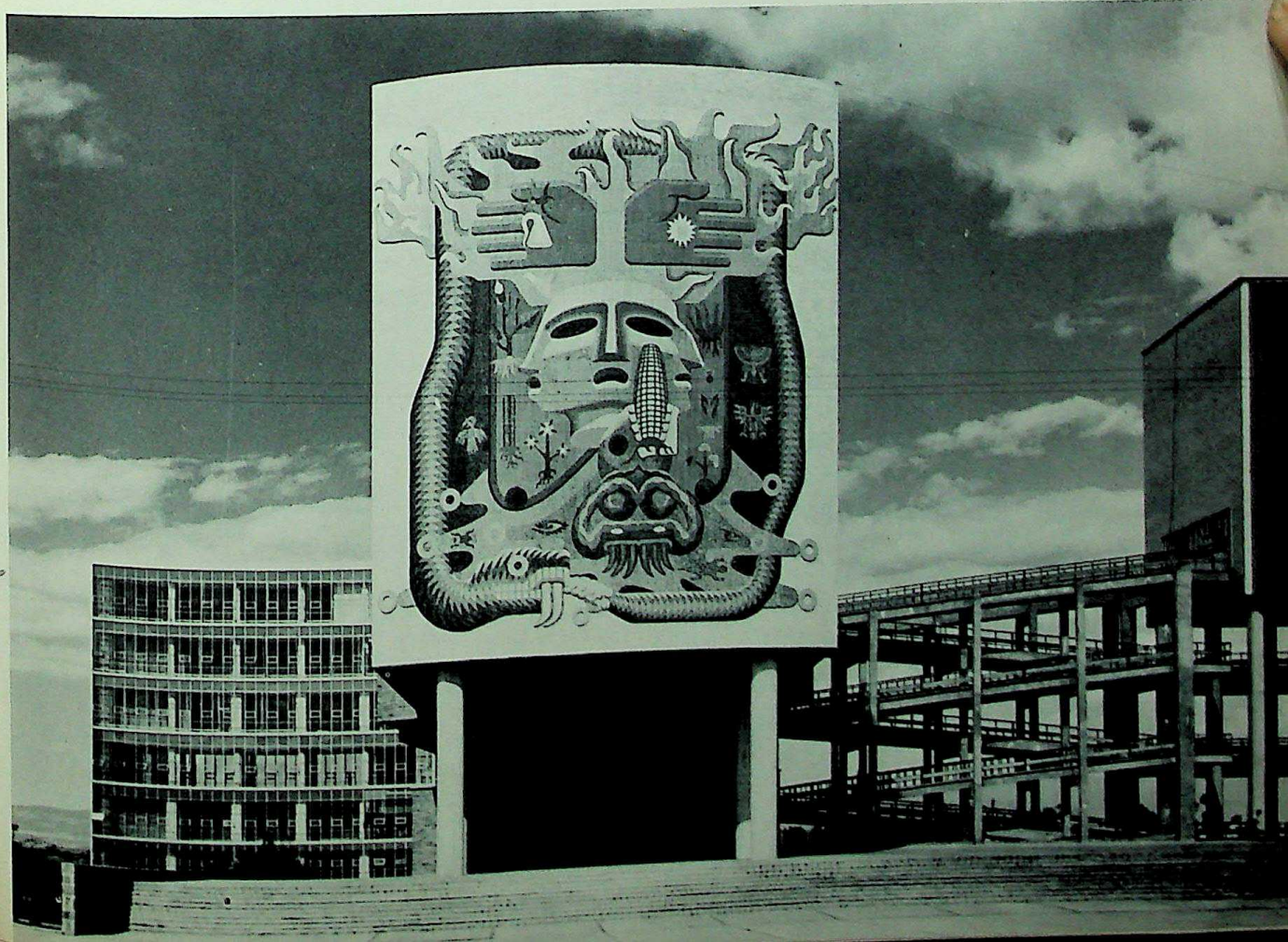
ing there to study painting and sculpture for two years. After a few years spent at the Secretaría de Hacienda, where he designed stamps for the Mexican Government, Eppens became a scene designer for El Cine Nacionál, working in the motion picture field for three years.

His first murals were three fresco panels in the Hotel Fundición de Zimapan, on the theme of "Mining and Miners." Two frescoes were later executed in the Rancho del Artista, a Mexico City center for popular-art festivals. In 1930 he participated in an exposition at the Museum of Modern Art in New York. He also exhibited at the Bellas Artes, with the Frente Nacionál de Artes Plasticás, and at Guadalajara with the Union of Painters, Sculptors and Engravers of Mexico. In 1936 he painted six murals in oil, with social themes centered around pediatric medicine, for the Children's Hospital of Mexico City.

In 1957, upon completion of the University City murals, Eppens was commissioned to execute another exterior mosaic decoration for the Hotel Boca Chica in Acapulco. The theme was the Aztec deities of spring. The following year he was commissioned to execute a stone mural at Jalapa, Veracruz for the recreation park and sanitorium of the National Mexican Railroads. The work was a tribute to the gallant railway engineer, the hero Jesús Garcia, who saved many lives but lost his own when he diverted a dynamite-loaded train, about to explode, from the populous section of the city of Macozari, in Sonora. Another mosaic mural was executed in 1958 for the Club of the National Railroad workers at Pantaco, the freight station of the capital.

EPPENS. Mosaic mural, School of Medicine, University City, Mexico City.



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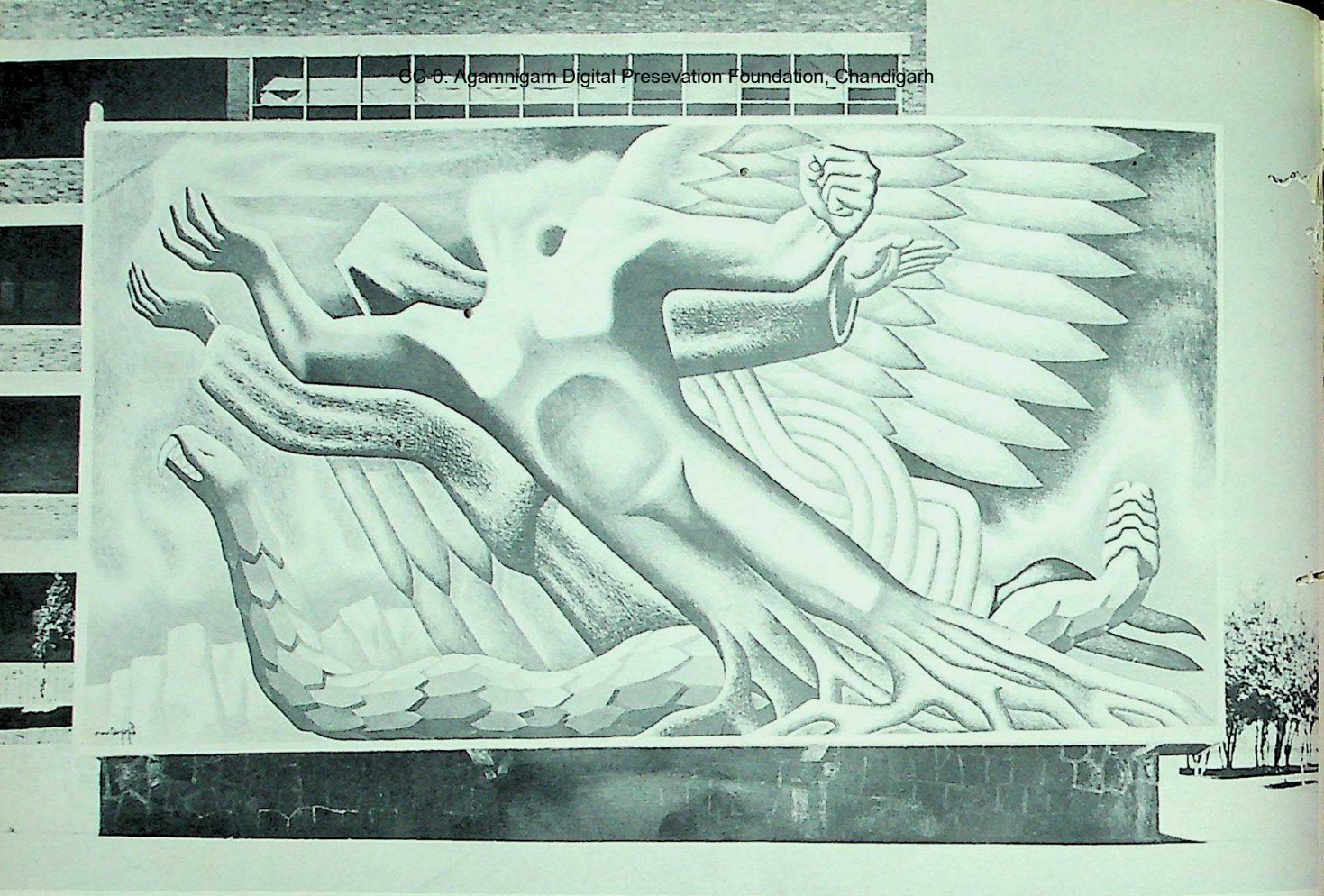

EPPENS, Mosaic mural, School of Dentistry, University City.

In 1959 Eppens executed two shields in high relief—each measuring 4 meters in diameter—for the waiting room of the new Mexico City Central Railway Station of the National Railroads.

As a designer of striking posters, Eppens has won the first and second prizes in the following contests: National Census, Electrical Industry of Mexico, Chopin Anniversary, Campaña Contra la Cegüera, Construction of Schools, and the 1960 poster contest of the Confederation of National Chambers of Commerce, on the theme "Development of Mexico, from Independence to the Present Day."

During 1959 and 1960 Eppens was occupied with the decoration of the Unidad "Independencia" of the Mexican Institute of Social Security, an enormous housing project at San Jeronimo in the Federal District. The artist executed eighty panels in stone mosaic of five colors, each, measuring 7¾ feet by 36½ feet, presenting a variety of decorative motifs including animals, flowers, fish, birds and trees.

He is married to Maria Lascurain, and has three children, Gabriela, Alejandro and Rodrigo.

GONZÁLEZ CAMARENA. "Belsario Dominguez," Senate Building.

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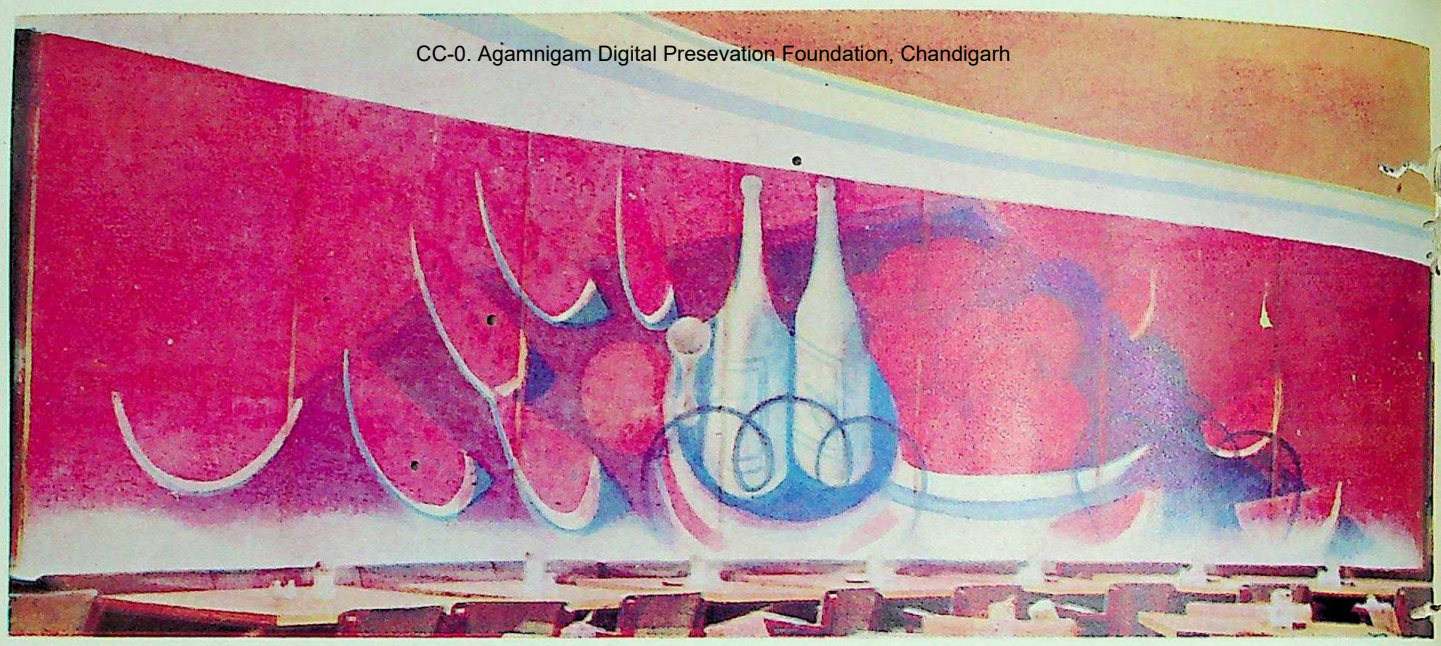
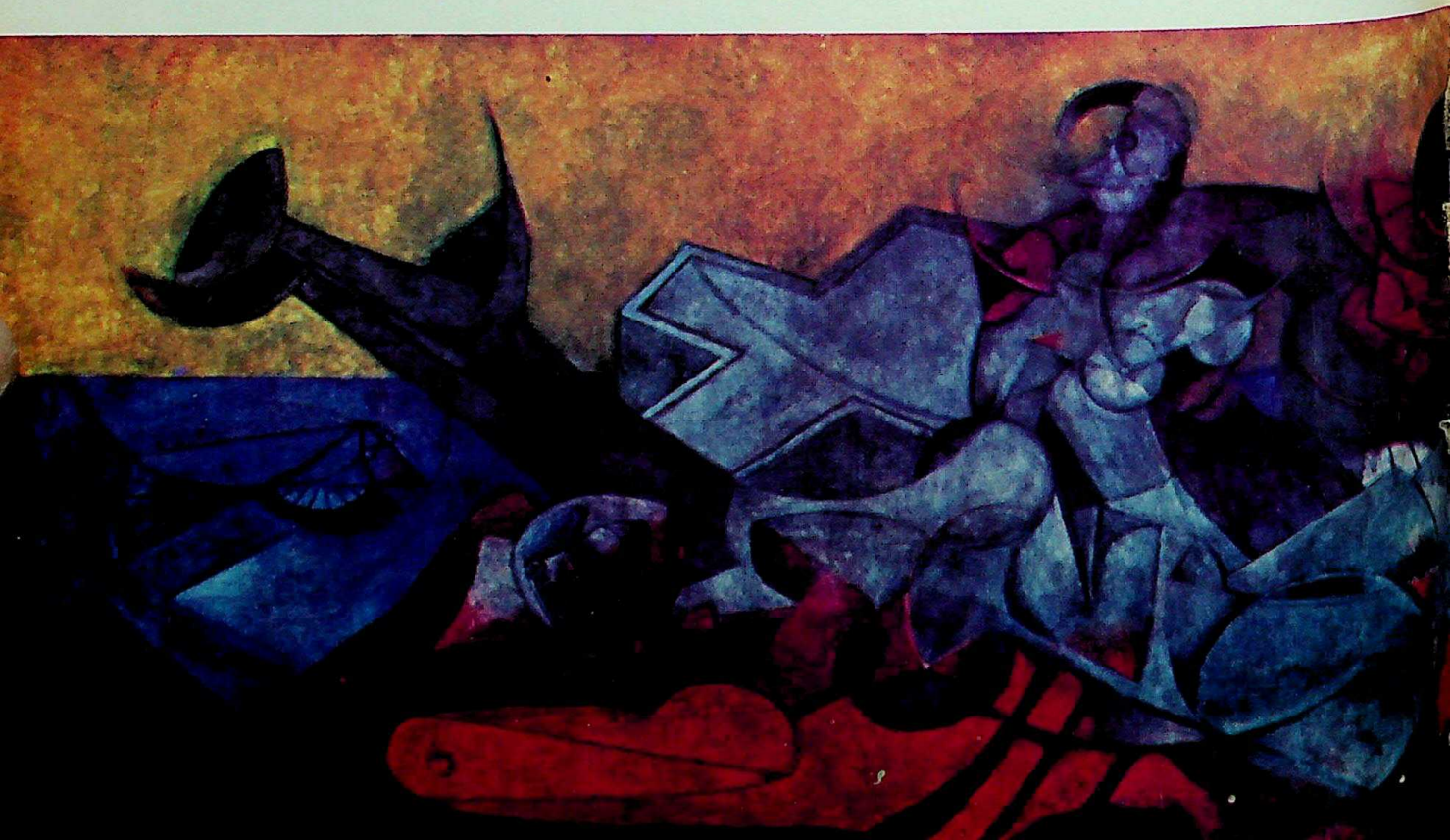


TAMAYO. "Fruits," Sanborn's Reforma.

TAMAYO. "America," Bank of the Southwest, Houston, Texas.



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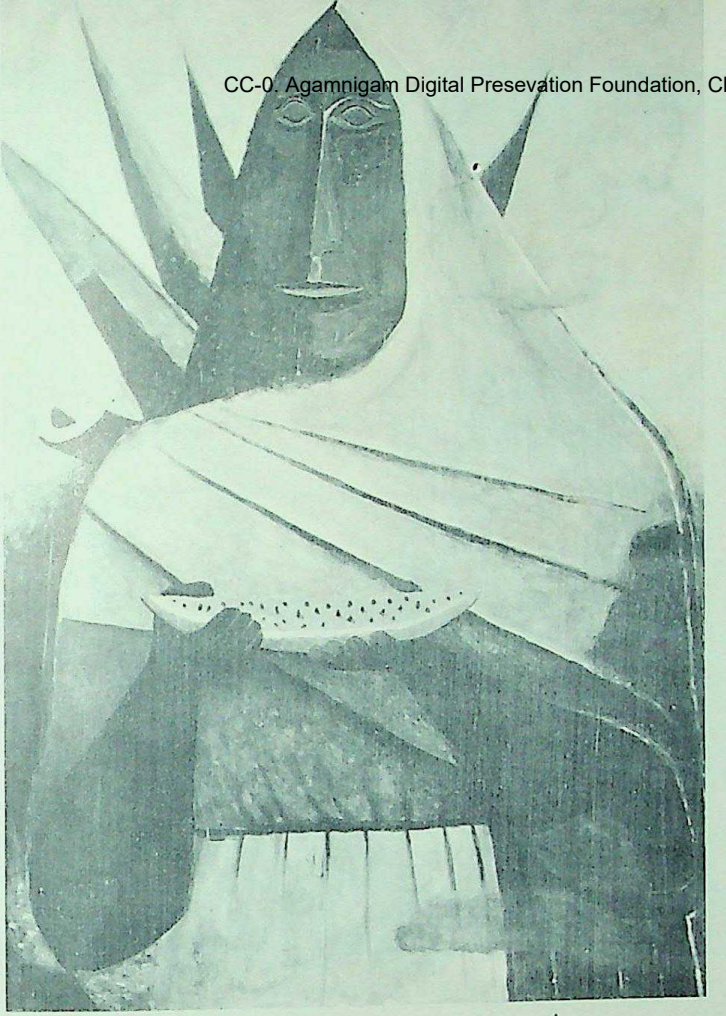

TAMAYO. "Mexicana," oil.

GARCIA NAREZO. "Moon Game," Cuernevaca.

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JESÚS GUERRERO GALVÁN

In 1942 Jesús Guerrero Galván painted a fresco mural in the University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, where he served as professor of art. His theme was the "Union of the Americas under the Protection of Liberty." This masterly work portrays a great symbolic figure of Liberty holding aloft a torch, while on the lower plane mothers of North and South America are seated with their children. Across the separating mountains and seas they are engaged in friendly, hopeful colloquy. The artist's vision of a harmonious America, with its diverse peoples linked by bonds of a common humanity that transcends political boundaries, is typical of the positive and tender concepts of this accomplished Mexican painter, born in Tonalá in 1910. Exquisite sentiment and poetic fantasy invariably enrich his canvases, through which he projects the "good, the true, and the beautiful" as man's normal heritage. The large oil painting "Sueño," depicting a young father watching over the slumber of his little daughter, is a striking example of the lyricism and noble simplicity that envelop the beings of the artist's gracious world. But overtone, rather than subject matter, is the essence of Guerrero Galván's distinguished creation. Totally by-passing romanticism, he communicates a true poetic feeling and establishes higher dimensions of

GUERRERO GALVÁN. "San Sebastian," oil.

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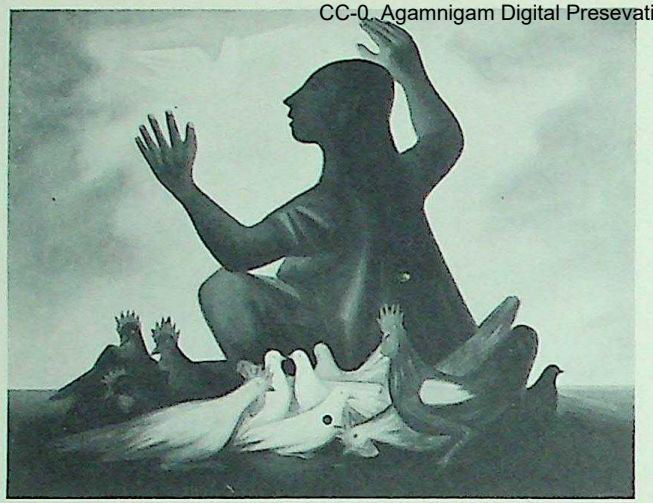


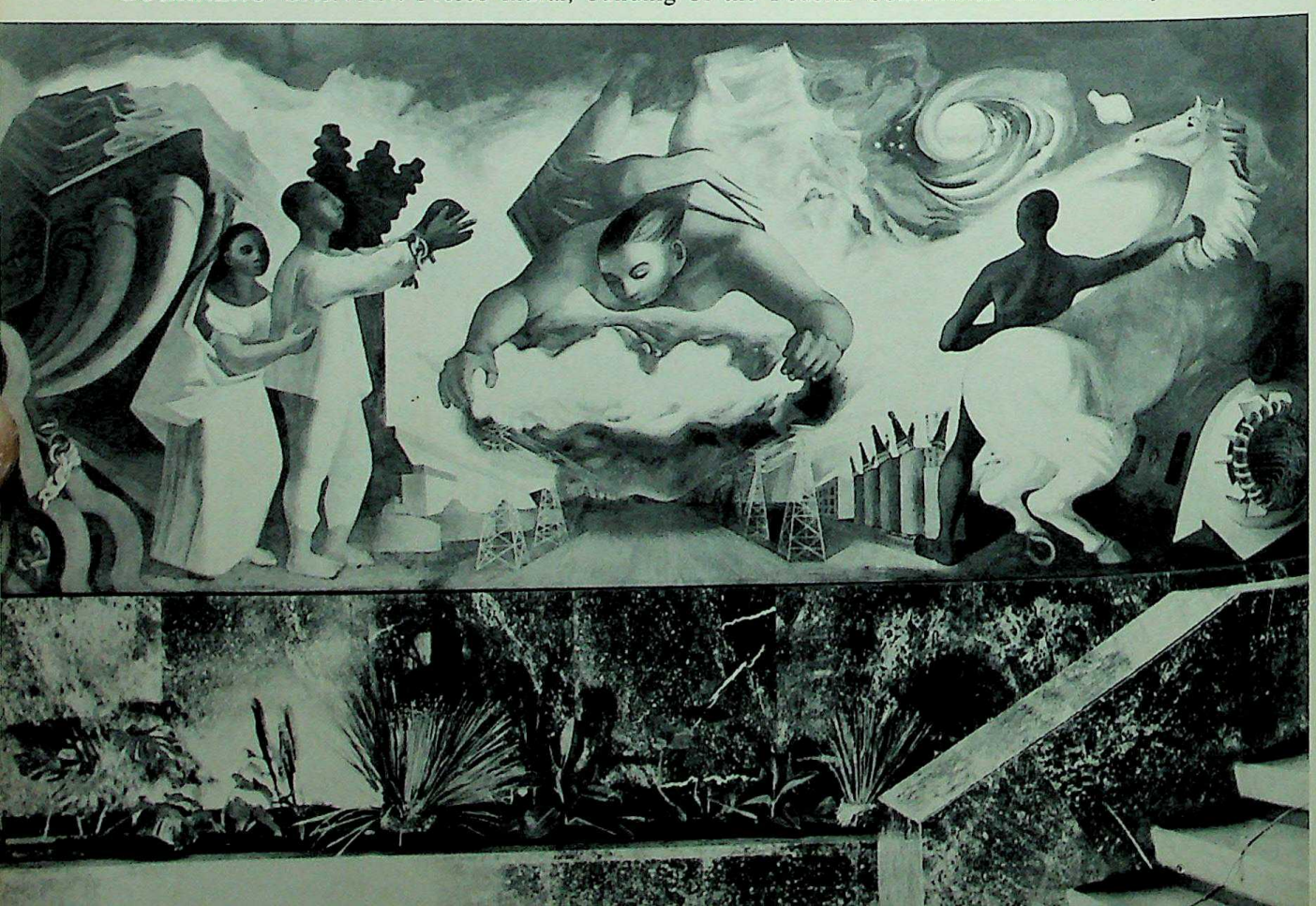
GUERRERO GALVÁN. "Woman with Birds," oil.

sensitivity through an alchemy in which fragments of his spirit seem to blend with the pigment. Because of its rare inspirational qualities, combined with superb technical equipment, his work is sought by the most discerning international collectors. As Dr. Justino Fernández points out, it is recognized as one of the most solid values of contemporary Mexican painting.

Outstanding among his few recent murals is the fresco "Electrification" in the main lobby of the new Federal Electricity Commission building near the entrance to Bosque Chapultepec. This dynamic work, painted in 1952 and approximately 28 feet wide and 8 feet high, depicts the humble folk of the pueblos gratefully receiving the precious gift of electric power. Their shackles are broken as they stretch out their hands toward a personified bounteous Nature who has harnessed the elements to serve mankind. With a marked economy of detail the interpretation shows how the gift has changed and enriched the lives of the Mexican people.

In 1960, Guerrero Galván suffered a nervous breakdown and accepted an invitation to visit Russia for rest and medical treatment.

GUERRERO GALVÁN. Fresco mural, building of the Federal Commission of Electricity.



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ALFREDO ZALCE

Howard S. Phillips, in his magazine *Mexican Life,* wrote: "If environment as well as heredity go into the making of an artist's personality, Alfredo Zalce was most fortunate to have been born in the year 1908 amid the fascinating landscape of Pátzcuaro, Michoacán, and the artistically rich Tarascan environment which has produced so many generations of Mexico's finest handicraftsmen."

Zalce went to Mexico City at an early age. His father and mother were commercial photographers, but instead of following this profession the boy devoted himself to the study of art. For six years he attended the San Carlos Academy, and for a while he studied sculpture at La Escuela de Talla Directa.

Since 1931, when he first exhibited with a group at the Ministry of Public Education, Zalce has been an active experimenter with different techniques in the three aspects of his creation—muralism, easel painting and the graphic arts. In the latter medium he was so outstanding that Jean Charlot sent some of his lithographs to the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Shortly before, in 1930, Zalce had organized an open-air art school in Taxco. That same year he, with Isabel Villaseñor, executed exterior murals at the Ayotla School, in Tlaxcala. In this work, which was later destroyed, color cements were used in Mexico for the first time. Returning to Mexico City, he taught school and did a fresco for the Ministry of Public Education.

In 1933, Zalce decorated, in fresco, the Dr. Balamis Industrial School for Women, in the Federal District. This mural, "Women in the Field of Labor," measuring 100 square meters, was also destroyed. One of his major frescoes, "Participation of Workers in the Graphic Arts in the Mexican Revolution," was done in collaboration with Pablo O'Higgins, Leopoldo Méndez and Fernando Gamboa. The fresco, 100 square meters in size, adorns the walls of the Talleres Gráficos de la Nación. His murals at the Normal School of Puebla, painted in 1938 on the theme "Social Struggle of the Mexican People," covering an area of 200 square meters, were executed in pyroxylin. He was assisted by Angel Bracho and Rosendo Soto.

In the succeeding years Zalce painted the following murals:

1942 "The Reactionary Press of Mexico," Secondary School Number 2 of the Federal District. Pyroxylin. Destroyed.

1949 "The Victims of the Eruption of Paracutin Establish Themselves in Caltzontzin." The Rural School of Caltzontzin, Michoacán. Fresco. In collaboration with Ignacio Aguirre and Pablo O'Higgins.

ZALCE. "Pedestrians," oil.

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ZALCE. "Fray Alonzo de la Vera Cruz and His Work," fresco, Museum of History, Morelia, Michoacán.

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ZALCE. "The Reform," detail of fresco, Palace of Government, Morelia, Michoacán.

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1951 "Fray Alonso de la Vera Cruz and his Work." Museum of History, Morelia, Michoacán. Fresco and cement.

1955 "Independence, Reform and Revolution." Palace of Government, Morelia, Michoacán. Fresco and cement.

1956 "The Contribution of Michoacán Thinkers to the Three Constitutions of Mexico." The Chamber of Deputies, Morelia, Michoacán. Fresco.

In the decoration of the walls above and on either side of the Grand Staircase of the Michoacán State Palace of Government, Zalce was assisted by his students. The figure of Hidalgo and the heroes of the war of liberation from Spanish rule—a struggle intimately associated with Morelia, formerly Valladolid, seat of the Independence movement—dominate this important mural, which was completed in 1957.

Zalce's creations as an easel painter have been largely concerned with Mexican rural life and with scenes of the coastal regions. In 1957 the artist also completed important sculptural works for the Medical Center of Mexico, D.F.

Many of Zalce's deepest impressions of Mexico's problems and hopes were gathered during the years between 1935 and 1941, when he traveled throughout the Republic on cultural missions, working not only on murals in the various towns but painting posters for public edification. In 1937 he was one of the founding members of the Taller de Gráfica Popular in Mexico City, and for many years he did all of his own graphic work there.

In 1944 the artist and his wife visited Yucatán, gathering material for a schoolbook. Living with the people, Zalce made innumerable sketches, many of which were used later in the folio of his Yucatán lithographs, published by the Taller de Gráfica.

In 1946 he visited the United States for the first time. He has taught painting and fresco in the School of Plastic Arts at the University of Mexico and drawing at the School of Painting and Sculpture in the Department of Public Education. In 1948 he organized an art school for workers in Uruapan, Michoacán, and in the hospital of this city he later painted murals.

Discussing the essential substance and values of the modern Mexican tradition, Mr. Phillips wrote: "The art of Alfredo Zalce, adhering in the main to the course of revolutionary Mexican Monumental art, provides an assurance not only of the continuation of this tradition, but of its renewed vitality, for it strives to transcend all conventional matrices and formulae, achieving a clear and incisive note of a quite personal utterance."

Perhaps one of Zalce's most significant achievements is the School of Plastic Arts of Morelia, which he founded in 1951 and which at present operates under the joint auspices of the University of Michoacán and the National Institute of Fine Arts.

As Sr. Jorge Olvera, co-ordinator of INBA exhibitions, declares in an official catalogue, "It is certain that this school, where classes in drawing, painting, sculpture, lithography and engraving are continuously held, has been given a special orientation and direction towards the applied arts by its founder. The good result is a new type of artist who places his sensitivity and talent at the service of the useful arts by means of functional designs for ceramics and silvercraft. An appeal is made to these artists to convert their creations into useful elements for the development of artistic industrial design, today so necessary in our environment."

In this sense, Sr. Olvera adds, the School of Morelia has been the precursor of many new centers of artistic diffusion, which now base their teaching programs on the stimulus provided by the crafts themselves.

Sr. Olvera further points out that it is difficult to calculate the value of Zalce's labor, since young artists from his shops have gone

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out and now teach painting and design with great success. "They have learned from Zalce," he writes, "to love their native land and generously give to it the enthusiasm of their youth and the knowledge and experience they have acquired with toil and perseverance in his taller-school. In a spirit similar to that which animated sixteenth-century missionaries such as Pedro de Gante and Vasco de Quiroga, these young cultural apostles of Michoacán have preferred to labor in remote corners of the province, eager to share cultural benefits which are the privilege of the capital and the great urban centers, refusing to be tempted by the promise of a more comfortable life in the city. They have realized a silent and almost anonymous labor in the places where the country needs the spirit of generosity and sacrifice that each day becomes more rare in our epoch."

ROBERTO CUEVA DEL RIO

One of the most skillful and prolific of the second-generation fresco painters is Roberto Cueva del Rio, who, despite having the use of only one hand, has executed many important, large-scale murals on public buildings in various parts of Mexico.

CUEVA DEL RIO. "Hands across the Border," mural.

Born in 1908 in the city of Puebla, he entered the National School of Plastic Arts in 1924, his teachers being the painters German Gedovious, Francisco de la Torre and Juan Pacheco, and the sculptor Carlos Deelan. In 1926 he began working as a muralist in some primary schools, at the same time doing line drawing along with the caricaturist Ernesto García Cabral, in the art department of the newspaper *Excelsior*. Between 1928 and 1931 Cueva del Rio traveled over the Republic as a teacher of drawing in rural schools, and, in 1928, held the first of his three one-man expositions in Mexico City.

In 1931 he went to New York, and in that year he exhibited in the Delphic Studios. In the following year he was commissioned by the Mexican Government to do an *al fresco* mural in the Mexican Embassy, Washington, D.C., and when he returned to Mexico, President Lázaro Cárdenas entrusted him with murals in rural schools and public buildings in the State of Michoacán. He also decorated the Cárdenas residences in Jiquilpán and Pátzcuaro, an assignment that he accomplished

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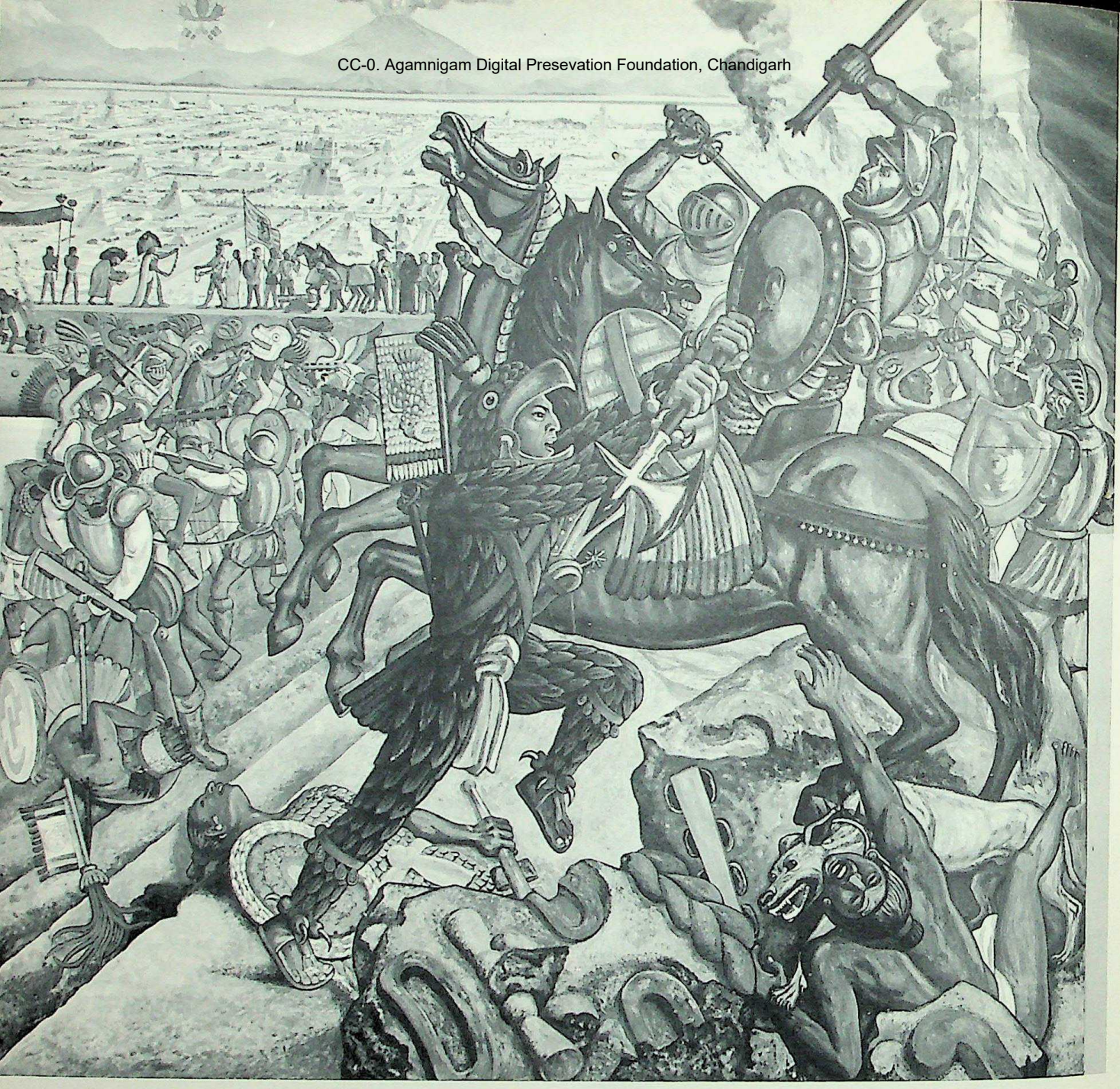

CUEVA DEL RIO. "Conquest of Mexico," fresco mural.

between 1934 and 1941. During this period he went to Washington to finish the mural in the Mexican Embassy, and on returning to Mexico he painted a collection of portraits for the Reception Salon of the Government Palace in Morelia. Later he decorated the Salon of the Congress in Apatzingan, and the Quinta Erendira (now the center of Cepal).

In 1947, he painted an *al fresco* mural in the Posada del Sol of Mexico City, depicting Morelos and the patriots of the Congress of Chilpancingo. From 1951 to 1955 he developed various themes on the history of Mexico in the Governor's Palace and the Agropecuaria School in Chilpancingo. His murals also appear in the Patrimonia Indígena of the Valley

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CUEVA DEL RIO. "The Mexican Race," vinylite mural, Secondary School, Ciudad Sahagún, Hidalgo.

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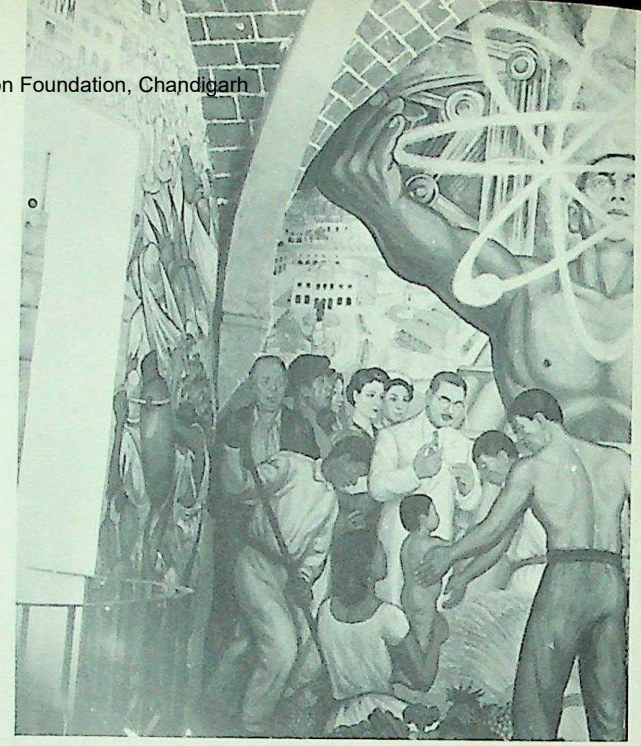
of Mezquital in Ixmiquilpan, Hidalgo, and in the vestibule of the New Museum of History in Pachuca. His latest work includes a mural in Ciudad Juárez, painted in 1957.

In 1958 Cueva del Rio decorated the staircase of the secondary school in Sahagun, portraying episodes in the history of that city. In 1959, in the El Mirador Hotel in Acapulco, he painted a mural on the meeting of the President of Mexico and the President of the United States there, earlier that year.

The spring of 1960 found him preparing a mosaic on the history of Mexico for the exterior walls of the secondary school of Tecpán de Galeana, in Guerrero. His easel painting and portraits have won popular and critical favor; among the former is a remarkable crayon study of Dr. Atl that has been frequently exhibited in group portrait exhibitions.



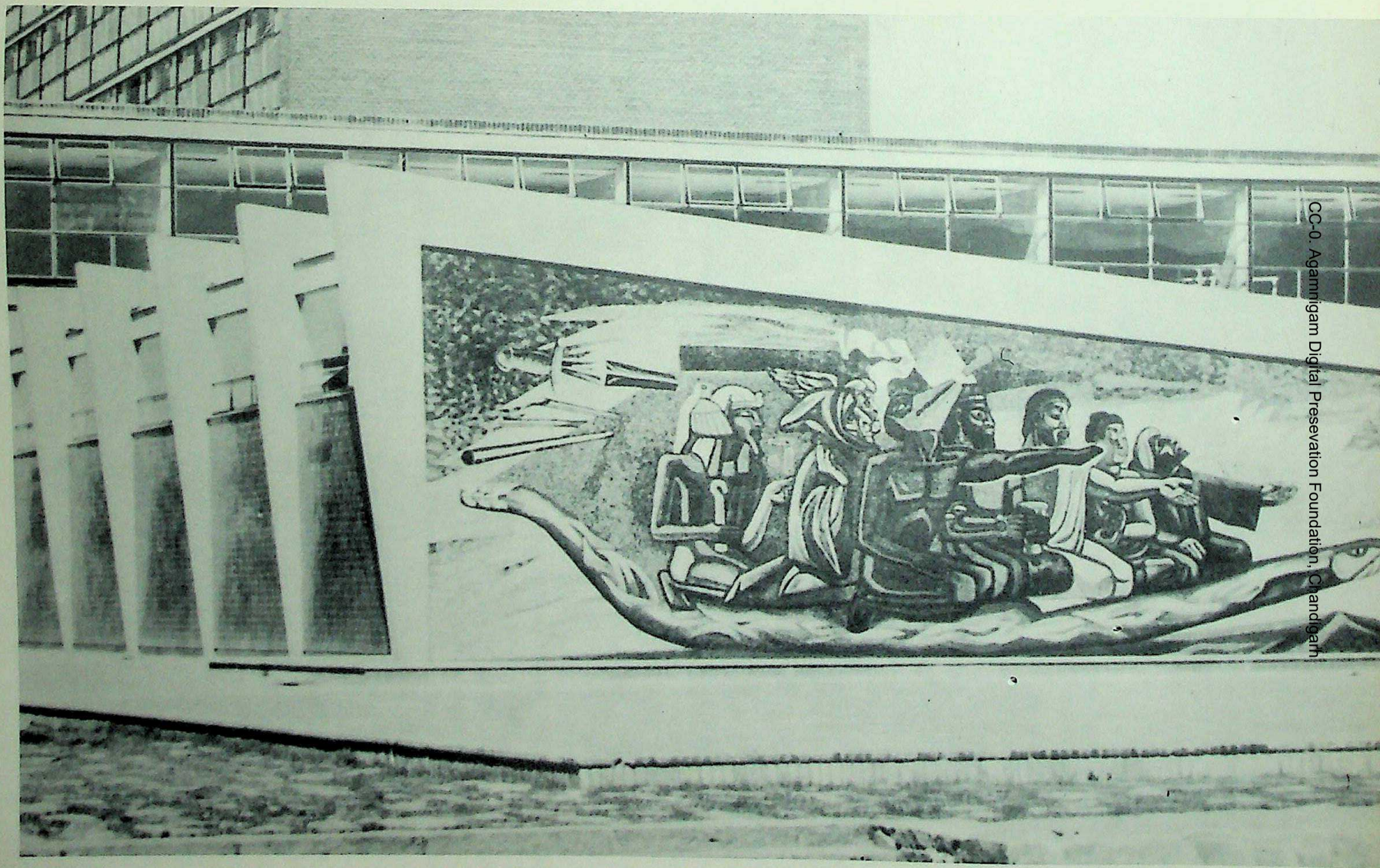
CUEVA DEL RIO. Detail of vinylite mural, Museum of History, Pachuco.

JOSÉ CHÁVEZ MORADO

One of the most consistent advocates among the so-called "second-generation" Mexican muralists of the ideals of their Golden Age predecessors is José Chávez Morado. As a writer of *manifiestos* and as a public speaker, but above all as a bold interpreter of revolutionary themes, this dynamic artist urges the adherence of Mexican muralism to its original socially conscious moorings. Like Rivera, Chávez Morado is a native of Guanajuato, having been born in the city of Silao in 1909. Of a restless nature, he embarked at an early age upon adventures that took him as an itinerant laborer to Canada, Alaska and various parts of the United States.

When he arrived in Los Angeles he decided to settle down for a while to develop the talent he had possessed since boyhood. For several months he studied drawing and painting at the Chouinard Art Institute and, upon his return to Mexico, entered the Central School of Plastic Arts in the capital. He did wood engraving under Francisco Díaz de León, director of the School of Book Arts at the San Carlos Academy. He was an active member of the League of Writers and Artists and the Taller de Gráfica Populár. In 1933 he became identified with the Galería de Arte Mexicana, and was named as Professor of Elementary Art in the Ministry of Public Education. With Siqueiros, he was made associate director of the organization Centro de Arte Realista. During this period he designed costumes and sets for stage productions, notably the ballet *Barricade* and the drama *Trust*.

In 1936 he painted an *al fresco* mural on the walls of the stairway in the Normal School of Jalapa, Veracruz, developing the theme of



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CHÁVEZ MORADO. "Return of Quetzalcoatl," glass mosaic, University City.

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the invasion of Veracruz and the people's defense of that port. This mural was executed during the time that Feliciano Peña and Francisco Gutiérrez were painting other murals on the walls of the building. During World War II the murals were whitewashed over by the school authorities.

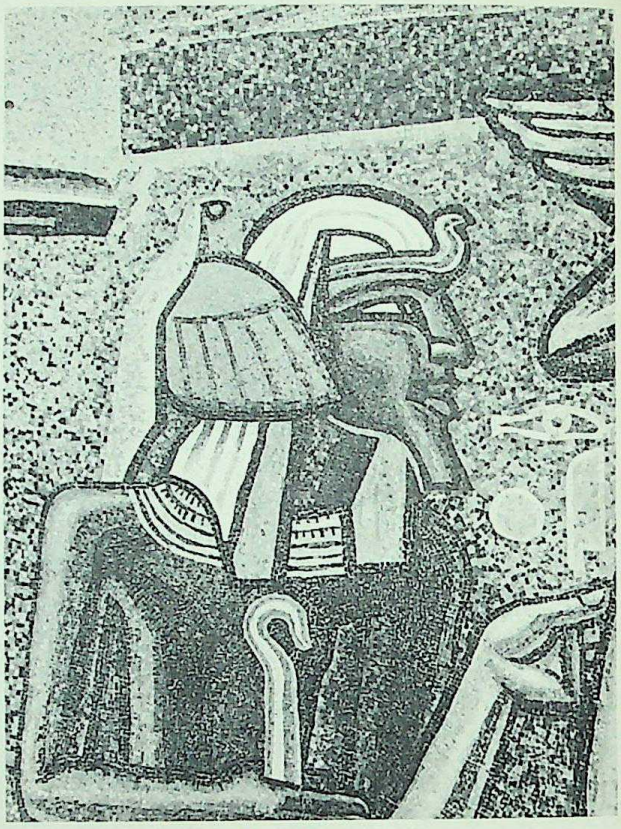
In 1945 the artist painted two murals in the tempera technique, one with egg emulsion and the other with casein, the latter adorning the walls of the Estado de Hidalgo School, in the Colonia Anahuac of the Federal District. In one of the murals the mingling of the Spanish-Indian cultures in the first epoch of the colony is interpreted, the interest centering on the figure of Fray Antonio Margil de Jesús. In the second part the Independence of Mexico is synthesized in the figure of Morelos. The first part of the trilogy—the Conquest and Cuauhtémoc—has not yet been realized in mural form, but details of the projected work appear among the artist's easel paintings.

In 1952 Chávez Morado executed a glass mosaic mural, "The Conquest of Energy," on the façade of the Science Auditorium of University City, which he describes as follows:

"At the extreme left is represented the fear and impotence of human beings before the wild beasts and the darkness, prior to the first epoch-making conquest of fire. In the center, a succession of figures that give the impression of being in movement, synthesize the steps taken by the scientific order to enable man to bring under control the forces of Nature from which he derives heat, energy, speed, etc., until he releases nuclear fission.

"At the extreme right of the mural are represented two ideas—basic to human survival and progress—the fear of the human species before the destructive power of the atomic bomb, and the hope that one day this extraordinary energy may be used in peaceful pursuits to achieve a happier world."

The same year, Chávez Morado executed another glass mosaic mural at University City.



CHÁVEZ MORADO. "Return of Quetzalcoatl," detail of glass mosaic, University City.

This work, "The Return of Quetzalcoatl," rises above a pool and faces the Great Court of the Science Faculties. The artist outlines his idea as follows:

"First and fundamentally, the mural presents the universality of our culture. It attempts to explain how our ancient pre-Hispanic culture was intermixed with the basic cultures of Europe, Asia, Africa, and produced the modern Mexican *Mestizo*. The figures are shown sailing on the mythical boat of entwined serpents, each bearing the clear fire of his respective culture, and shown in the attitude of offering it to the New World. In the background, a pyramid, pierced with arrows, lances and swords, and crowned on the left by a light, signifies that culture survives the barbarism of war."

During 1953 and 1954 Chávez Morado was engaged in decorating the east and west walls

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of the main body of the Ministry of Communications and Public Works building at the corner of Yola and Universidad in the Mexican capital. This decoration in Mexican mosaic—composed of colored stones, glass, tiles and burnt clay—is distributed over the largest walls decorated, to date, in Mexico. Two of these walls measure 36 by 24 meters, and the other two 9 by 36 meters. The north and south walls were decorated by Juan O'Gorman, and the small lower portions of the building by a group of young painters. The simple allegorical theme corresponds to the technique and to the architectural and decorative mood. These murals have aroused much controversial discussion. Chávez Morado himself explains that it is enduring chromatic beauty that gives pictorial interest to great exterior architectural surfaces, and that, moreover, a more economical solution does not exist. It may lack, the artist points out, the plasticity of brush-applied color, as well as the richness of tone and the modeling of glass mosaic, but it surpasses both in opacity and economy of cost. The artist adds that, in this particular edifice, he attempted to create a façade and to sustain his project, with no aim of producing atmospheric effects. He believes that in this type of work the painter should renounce subtleties and independent dynamics appropriate to easel pictures. His effort should be directed to the common end of constructing an edifice that achieves physical requisites, economic and cultural realities, while preserving the harmony of the various parts.

CHÁVEZ MORADO. Detail of fresco, Granaditos, Guanajuato.

In 1954 he completed decorations of the exterior wall and the vestibule of the CIBA Laboratories, on the Calzada de Tlalpán in Churubusco. The interior mural, in fresco, deals with the theme of pre-Hispanic medicine. The exterior mural, executed in Mexican mosaic, continues with an interpretation of the same theme. In this mosaic the artist attempted to achieve greater dynamics and modeling of figures.

In 1955 Chávez Morado began the decoration, in fresco, of the Staircase of Honor in the Alhondiga de Granaditas, in Guanajuato, Guanajuato. The theme of this work, which covers a surface of 220 square meters, is the Independence Struggle, with Hidalgo as the central figure. The architectural setting for the huge composition, which the artist believes to be the major performance of his career, is majestic and of the most interesting complexity. The mural area is composed of three irregular walls that follow the ramp of the stairway and two barrel vaults. The planes are linked with cornices, arches and balustrades of cut stone. The dynamic composition creates an uninterrupted line that unites all the architectonic elements. The color is warm, with certain luminous and cold nuclei. The

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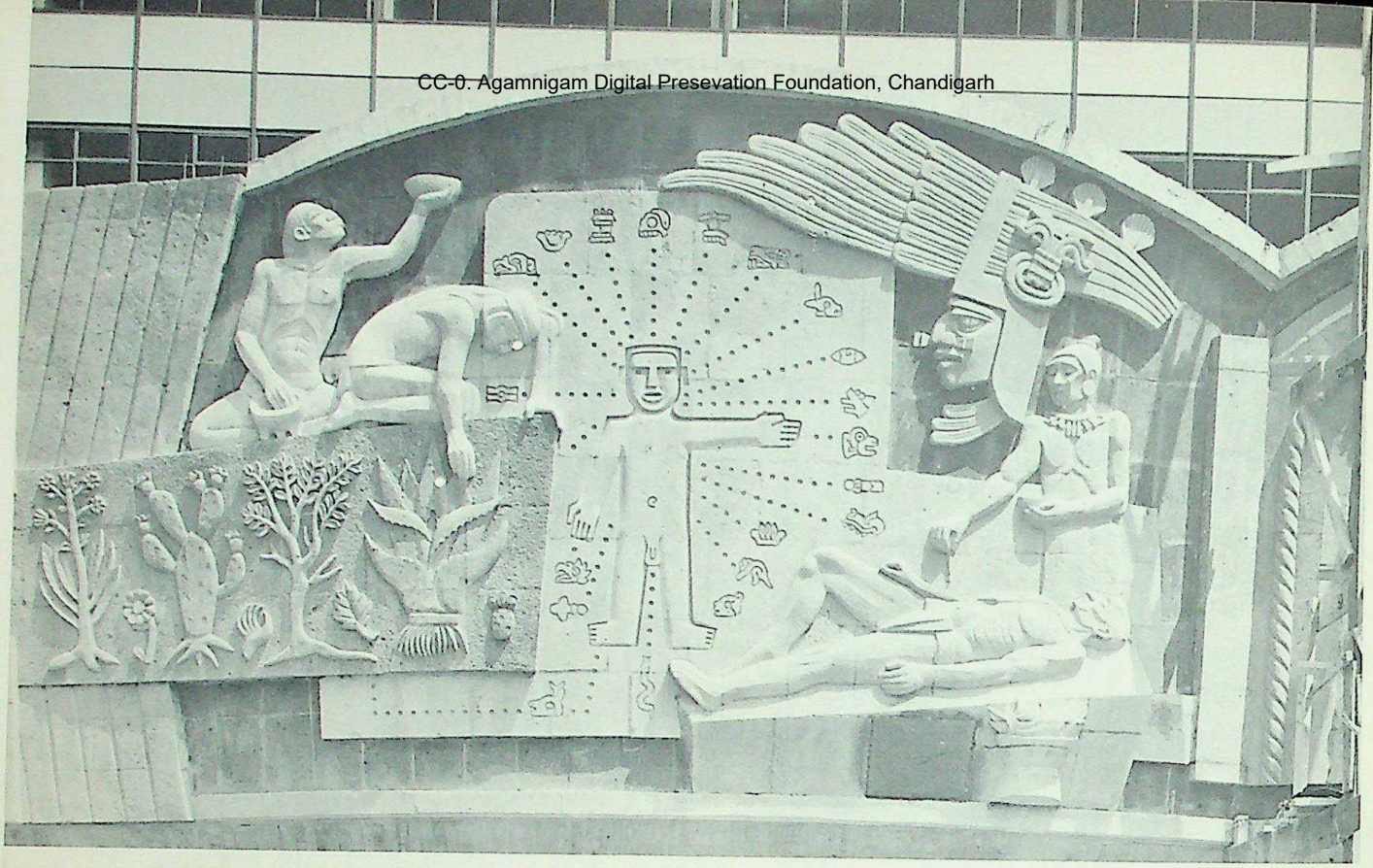
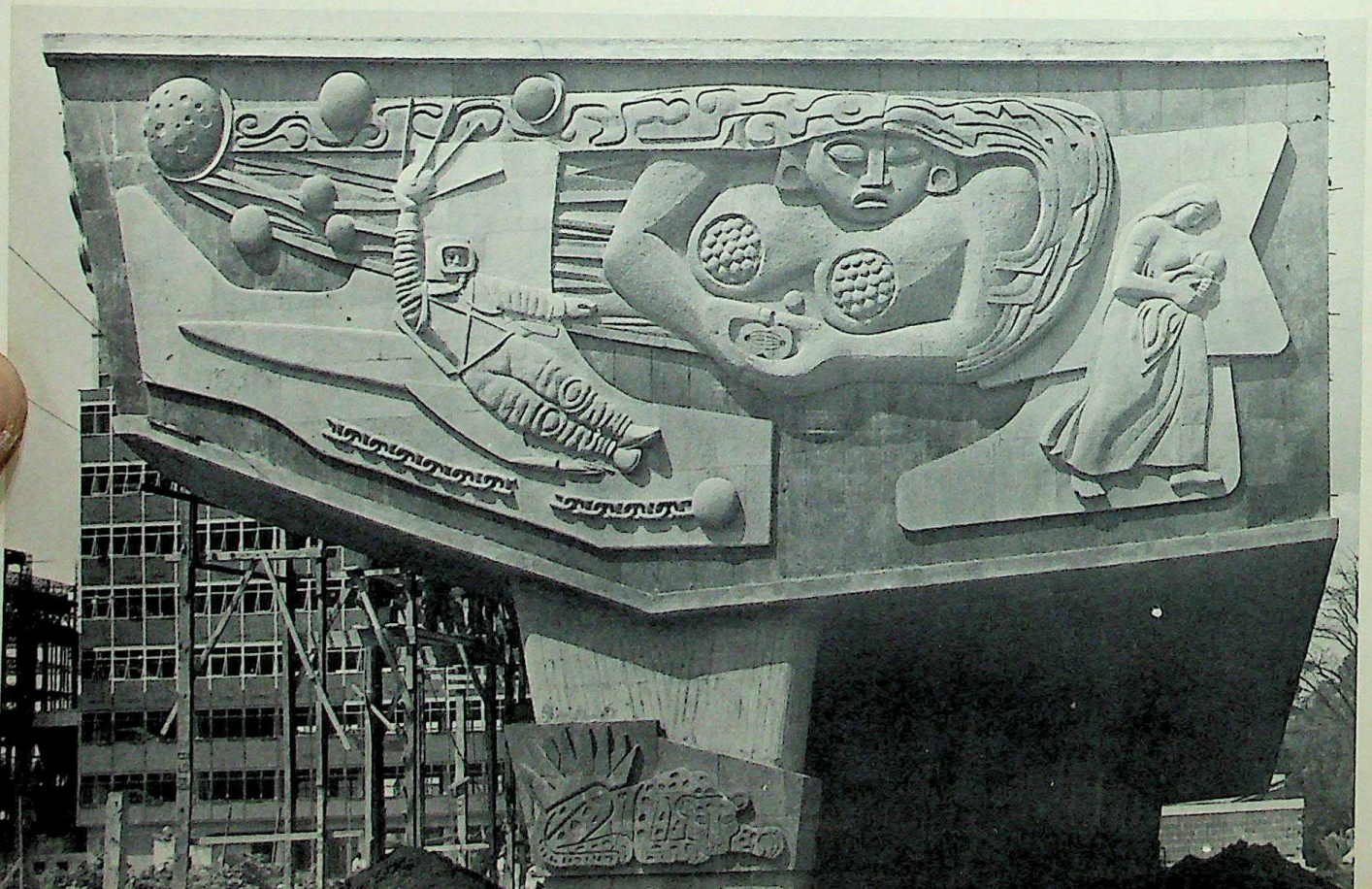


CHÁVEZ MORADO. "Science and Magic in Pre-Hispanic Medicine," front panel of quarried-stone mural, Medical Center, Mexico City.

CHÁVEZ MORADO. "Man Begins His Flight," side panel of quarried-stone mural, Medical Center, Mexico City.



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CHÁVEZ MORADO. "Colonial Hospitals," front panel of quarried-stone mural, Medical Center, Mexico City.

formal solution is realistic, but the work contains free, imaginative passages that help to resolve movements, shortening and thematic emphasis. Chávez Morado is now dedicating himself to intensive study of the historic edifice. He plans to combine the fresco decoration of the stairways and corridors with the sculpture of two doors in bronze as part of his project for the total decoration of this, the most cherished of historic edifices in his native state, a project that is to be realized through popular subscription.

The artist's latest completed creation is a series of panels in quarried stone of various colors, installed in the new Medical Center on Avenida Cuauhtémoc in Mexico City. The themes of the two front panels are "Science and Magic in Pre-Hispanic Medicine" and "Colonial Hospitals," respectively. One of the lateral panels represents Atomic Age phenomena and is titled "Man Begins His Flight." These panels were executed in 1957 and 1958. Nearing completion is a mural in an ancient medium but one that is new to contemporary Mexican art. This is a bronze screen measuring approximately 9¾ feet by 41 feet and interpreting the dual heritage of the Mexican *Mestizo*. The open metal work between the

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figures, landscapes and other elements of the striking composition admits the light and endows the scene with a gracious luminosity. Turning more and more to sculpture and relief, Chávez Morado is also engaged in executing miniature figures of Mexico's national heroes and celebrated personalities for the Museo Didactico Historico de la Independencia y la Revolución, now under construction in Bosque Chapultepec.

In addition to murals, he has also done magazine illustrations, woodcuts and easel paintings. In some of his work one finds a suggestion of the grotesques of José Posada.

JOSÉ GARCÍA NAREZO

Concerning the young painter José García Narezo, the eminent Mexican critic Andres Henestrosa has made this interesting comment:

"If we did not know him, if he were not here among us, we would say, standing before his pictures, that he is a man well past middle age. Such is the mastery evidenced in his painting. If we did not know him, if he were not here among us, we would say, standing before his pictures, that he is a young man."

The words of the intellectual leader aptly define the impact of García Narezo's contribution to Mexican art. For it is distinguished by the gracious coexistence of qualities generally regarded as mutally exclusive—tender, yet mature; strong, yet gentle; eloquent, yet, at times, moderate and even restrained. The young painter's background would indicate that this integrated duality stems from the molding influences of two cultures. Born in Madrid, Spain in November, 1922, José García Narezo is the son of a Mexican mother and a Spanish father. He came to Mexico with his family when he was only six years old, and during this first period of his life in Mexico he studied in the open-air art school of Tlalpán in the Federal District. This was in the year 1932. At the same time he received instruction from his father, Gabriel García Maroto, a painter and investigator in the art field, whose own work in Spain, Cuba and Mexico brought him early recognition.

García Narezo's serious aesthetic creation began in 1934, when, back in Spain, his father organized the Home-School for Deaf Mutes, known as "Imagen." Here José began to sketch, fashioning the basis for his own original personality. The Spanish Civil War produced the vital spark that decided his future vocation once and for all. In 1936 the boy took part in various art exhibitions, and shortly afterwards the Ministry of Public Education issued a book with reproductions of his illustrations entitled, *A Child and War*. In 1938, at Barcelona, he was awarded a prize of 2,000 pesetas for the best work submitted in a contest of children's water colors.

In that same year García Narezo returned to Mexico as a political refugee and became a naturalized citizen of the country. It was here, under his father's guidance, that he started his life as a professional painter.

The greater part of his later works reflect the profound inspiration he derived from a vibrant awareness of the inherent possibilities of the Mexican reality.

Exhibitions of his early youthful drawings have been shown at the Gallendent College in Washington in 1938 and at the Arden Gallery, New York in the same year, the House of Culture, Cuba and the Stendahl Galleries, Los Angeles, California in 1939. The Museum of Los Angeles and the Worcester Museum exhibited the collection in 1939, and in 1940

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TAMAYO. "Man Afire."

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GARCIA NAREZO. "Mexican Landscape."

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GARCÍA NAREZO and a mural detail.

it was shown at the Institute of Modern Art in Boston.

In recent years García Narezo has exhibited at leading galleries of the Mexican capital; at the M. H. de Young Museum in San Francisco, California in 1944; at the Fine Arts Gallery in San Diego, California in 1945; in the exhibition of Mexican Art in Edificio la Cronica, Lima, Peru in 1954; at the Witte Memorial Museum in San Antonio, Texas in 1952; and at the A.C.A. Gallery in New York in 1960. In 1949 the artist was awarded second prize in a poster contest organized by the National Campaign for the Construction of Schools in Mexico, and the same year he received honorable mention in an exhibition called "The City of Mexico as Interpreted by its Painters." A Mexican Government-sponsored exhibition of his works was held at the Galería de Artes Plásticas Mexicanas in 1950.

One of his most highly acclaimed achievements in black and white is the collection of illustrations for a version of *Popol Vuh* by Ermilo Abreu Gómez, published by the Editorial Leyenda de Mexico.

García Narezo has executed decorative murals for several private homes in Mexico City, and "Electricity at the Service of Sonora" is the theme of two large-scale murals that he recently completed in Ciudad Obregón, Sonora.

His most important work in the mural field is an arresting Italian mosaic panel erected in

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GARCÍA NAREZO. Detail of mural, Duco.

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the civic plaza of a new suburb of Cuernavaca known as "Las Lomas de Cuernavaca." This strikingly original and highly imaginative mosaic, titled "A Game with the Moon" and measuring 221 square meters, is a feature of an architectural construction symbolizing the age of interplanetary transportation.

García Narezo's oil paintings, water colors and sketches form part of many private collections in the United States, Cuba and Mexico. At his Mexico City studio he is now engaged in preparing color sketches for mural projects he will execute in the near future. Among them is a 50-meter long vault decoration titled "The Sea," and destined for a new hotel in Acapulco.

JUAN JOSÉ SEGURA

Juan José Segura has added new modalities to contemporary Mexican art through his porcelain ceramic murals. Born in Guadalajara in 1901, his heredity and ancestral tradition stimulated his early experiments in ceramics and allied aesthetic fields. At sixteen years of age he began his art studies in New York, under Walter Thompson. Later he was a pupil of the famous Spanish master Julio Romero de Torres, at the San Fernando Academy in

SEGURA. Detail from ceramic mural "Ruinas de Bajio."

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Madrid. In Paris he continued his studies under Ignacio Zuloaga.

Segura's first exhibitions, chiefly paintings of the bull ring, were held between 1926 and 1931 in Mexico, Philadelphia, Los Angeles, Detroit and New York. Since 1927 he has been a frequent exhibitor in the salons of Paris and Madrid, and during 1929, he exhibited with the Sociedad Mexicana de Artes Gráficas, the Club de Palette de Los Angeles and the Internationals of Cincinnati, Philadelphia and Seville. Segura's new ceramic technique was demonstrated at a comprehensive exhibit in 1957 at the Mexican-North American Cultural Institute and, the same year, in the Mexican Government Art Galleries, in Los Angeles, where he gave several conferences and explained his technique on various TV programs.

Of recent years Segura has devoted himself mainly to painting ceramic murals on tiles, executing numerous small- and large-sized works, which have been exhibited in Mexico, the United States and Europe. His fine, sensitive drawing, acquired through long and rigorous European training, admirably fits him for the beautiful and delicate medium that the Chinese have used for centuries, but which is extremely rare in modern painting. He has not only mastered the difficult, ancient art, which requires great precision of line and delicacy of touch, but has succeeded in obtaining the effects and values of other plastic techniques in his original creations.

Segura's invention of oil fresco was the result of an unremitting search for new media of artistic expression. The artist himself tells the story of his discovery in a monograph by Xavier San Martin titled *Fresco al Oleo de Juan José Segura,* as follows:

"In the year 1933, the Spanish Ambassador to Mexico, Sr. Alvarez del Vayo, commissioned me to do some frescoes in the Spanish Embassy. I examined the walls and found a great deal of moisture. It occurred to me then to make a portable fresco that would not touch the damp walls. Artist friends objected, but I insisted that my experience as a painter and my special studies of fresco in Florence, qualified me to assume the responsibility.

"Provided with the necessary elements for my work, I prepared the classical mixture of the Florentine fresco: one part marble dust; one part finely sifted river sand; two parts lime sifted and purified. To this mixture I added liquid and then left it over night for the 'moon to kiss,' for, according to the Florentines, the 'kiss' is essential. The next day, I prepared the surface of the two large portable panels and began to paint. The work went well and after some days, I showed the first fresco to a delighted Ambassador.

"But that night, the work cracked and the fragments fell to the floor. I began to understand something of the great Leonardo's disillusionment under similar circumstances, when I saw the entire surface fall and disintegrate. I fully appreciated what he must have felt when he attempted to paint a fresco with oil colors. I knew, too, that I had to search longer for that which the immortal master failed to find. But I did discover a combination of substances that when added to the Florentine mixture held it fast to the asbestos-cement slab and permitted me to paint on the wet plaster. With 'good luck,' that marvelous accomplice of the arts, I completed the two frescoes, knowing well that they must face the most severe of all tests—that of time."

Recently, after the passing of twenty-seven years, Segura informed us that these frescoes, and others painted around the same period in the same process, are still in perfect condition. But, as he concedes, they were not frescoes in oil. However, seven years of intensive search —of mixing, experimenting, painting in a studio filled with plaster and oil—finally produced the desired results. As Segura himself tells it: "At last, I had the great satisfaction of successfully mixing water and oil; making a perfect emulsion, which added to the mortar, permitted one to paint on a wet or dry surface

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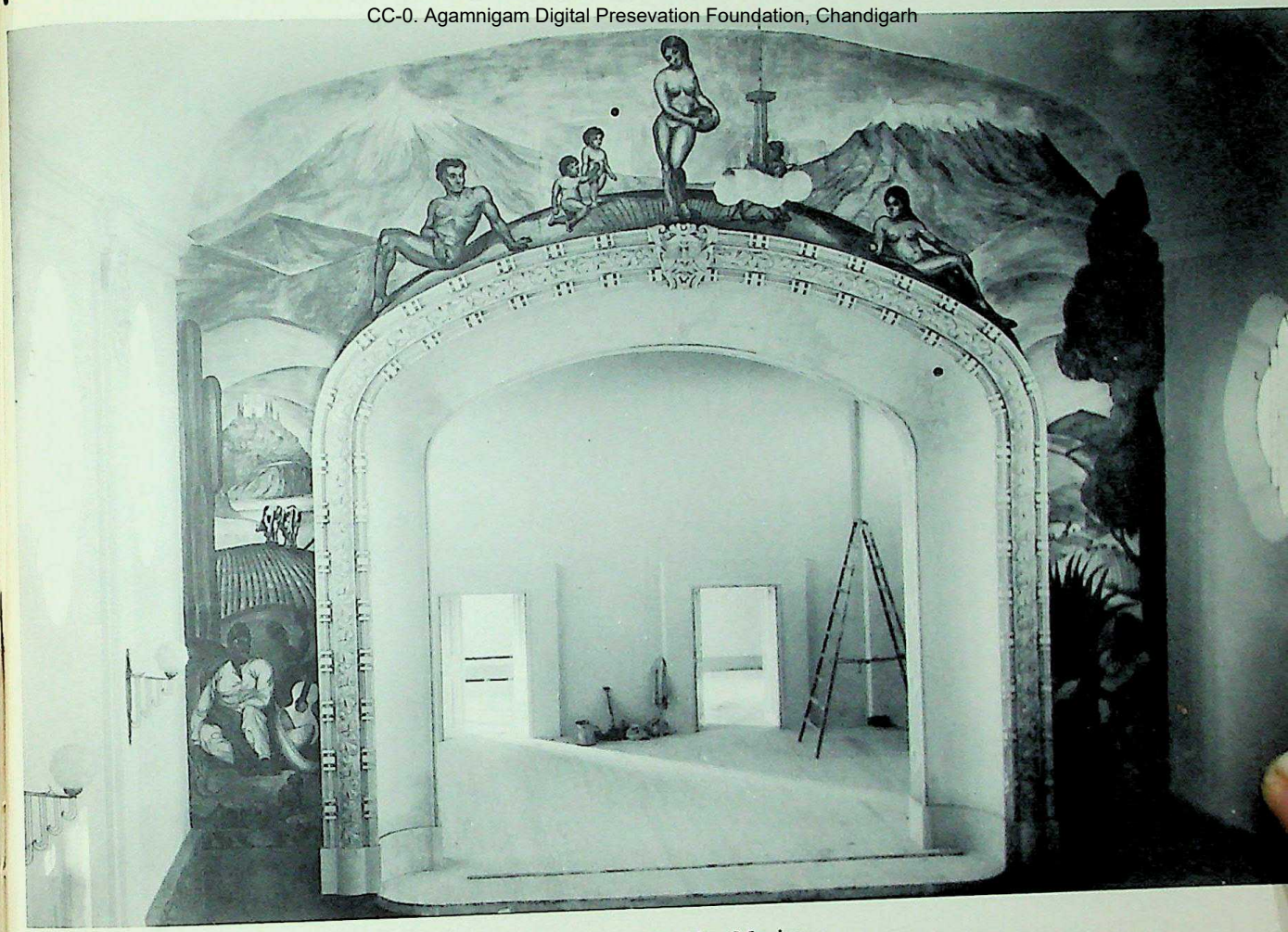

SEGURA. Mural, auditorium, School of Technology, Puebla, Mexico.

with no loss of brilliancy in color or adhesive quality.

"After several test paintings, covering a period of two months, I confided my discovery to a friend, Carlos León. Through him, the process was made known, and according to the article of another friend, the poet, Rafael Bernal, 'It caused widespread and contradictory discussion.' One night I found the great Dr. Atl in a cafe patronized by Bohemians. Explaining my fresco in oil process, I found a comprehending and enthusiastic listener. He began to paint some small frescoes in his studio and then wrote the article 'New Procedures for Painting,' published May 14, 1940, from which the following is an excerpt: 'When the average man says a Fresco in Oil has been invented, in every ordinary mind there arises a question. The man smiles, sometimes sarcastically, sometimes with a depreciatory gesture. Fresco in oil? That's a contradiction. Fresco is fresco, and oil is oil! But now, for some months, fresco and oil are the same thing. Yesterday, it was impossible to paint with oil on a surface prepared with water. It seemed stupid even to try, since before yesterday no one had been able to do so. But today, any painter can paint with oil colors on a wet surface and obtain the same results as was obtained in the old, traditional fresco that the

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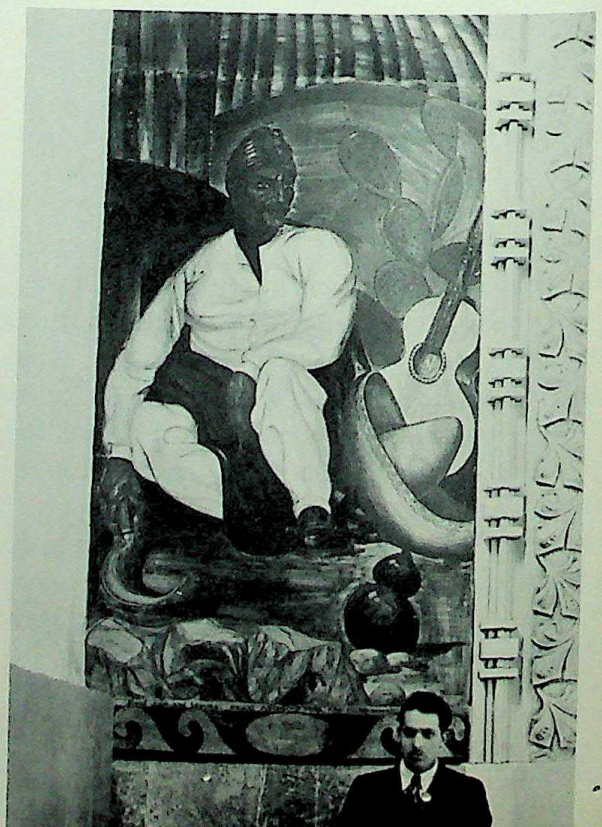
SEGURA. "The Witch Tree," ceramic painting on tile.

Renaissance Italians used to the limit of perfection. And I believe that the results, especially on small surfaces, are superior to those of the Classical Florentine fresco.

'The worker of this technical miracle is Juan José Segura. It is claimed by the critics that Segura has "discovered" a new method. This is an error of statement. One discovers a new star in the firmament, or in Hollywood, or a new element in Nature, or, one discovers, on some beautiful morning, that he owes, through an oversight, six or seven months rent. But a technique, be it of anything, is invented. An invention is a combination of



SEGURA. Detail of fresco, School of Technology, Puebla, Mexico.

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SEGURA. Detail, porcelain mural, Hotel Plaza Vista Hermosa, Mexico City.

verified elements brought about through the application of the mind and the work of the hands. The painter, Juan José Segura, has invented a new procedure, he has *not* discovered it. And this invention is not to supplant known procedures, but to enrich the technique of painting. Therefore, painters now have a complete and logical medium with which to express the maximum of their personal vision and vigor.

'I have been an indefatigable investigator and have invented three or four procedures of painting myself that are different from the traditional ones. But here, I sincerely state that the Fresco in Oil invented by Juan José Segura is not only superior to all others, but also constitutes the greatest support to the pictorial technique since the brothers Van Eyck invented oil paints.' "

In 1959, at the invitation of the Governor of Jalisco, Segura exhibited his ceramics and canvases in the Gallery of the Delgollado Theatre in Guadalajara, and later he participated in the National Exhibit of Ceramics in Columbus, Ohio.

Among his outstanding ceramic murals are those that adorn the Papagayo Room of the Fairmont Hotel in San Francisco, and the Salon Tramonto in the Hotel Plaza Vista Hermosa, in the Mexican capital. Segura has also painted the portraits of many international celebrities.

Segura's second mural for the Hotel Plaza Vista Hermose has recently been installed in the lobby. The work, depicting a synthetic Mexican landscape of rare lyrical quality, is in high-fired porcelain tile. Measuring thirty feet in length and more than three feet in height, it is the largest mural in this medium, in the Republic.

The artist and his American wife, also a portrait painter, divide their time between a Mexico City studio-residence and a hillside villa in Acapulco.

Segura is listed in the Sopena Encyclopedia of Spanish and Latin American Art. In January, 1960 he received the José Clemente Orozco Gold Medal, awarded annually for an outstanding contribution by a Jalisco-born painter to contemporary Mexican art.

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IGNACIO BETETA

Among the public figures in various nations who pursue painting as an avocation, Mexico's entry, according to professional criteria, can claim top international honors.

For General Beteta, the second youngest to wear the eagle and three stars of his high rank in the Mexican Army, is not only a painter of rare technical skill. He is a sensitive artist whose brush recaptures the subtle atmospheric nuances and intangible poetic values that represent an enlargement upon the world of vision and that serve to recreate that which is seen, as well as the deeper reality that is felt or experienced.

General Beteta's case appears to be unique in contemporary art. Unlike most public men who have adopted painting as a major hobby, and who turn to it in their maturity as a means of relaxation from their arduous duties and heavy responsibilities, General Beteta was attracted to art even before he entered army life. As a matter of fact, he joined the armed forces by way of art school. His introduction to the manual of arms came about as an incident in the drama of Revolución Sociál. In the fabulous decade that followed the collapse of the Díaz regime, Dr. Atl, then director of the San Carlos Academy, recruited the students for his famous battalion, quartered at the Casa del Obrero Mundial, today Sanborn's House of Tiles.

The students, together with a group of professional artists, including Orozco and Siqueiros, left Mexico City for Orizaba to join the regiments commanded by General Obregón. Ignacio Beteta was then only fifteen years of age, but he and his young fellow students—in the expansive spirit of Revolutionary optimism—were promised commissions as lieutenants upon their arrival in Orizaba. Instead, all became infantry privates. But despite this initial disillusionment, General Beteta assured us, his first taste of army life left its imprint and induced him to choose arms as his profession and the art of painting as the serious occupation of his leisure hours.

During the years of his military training, the young Beteta vigorously pursued his studies, drawing from life with an intensity of purpose that assured his mastery of the various technical problems to which there is neither short cut nor royal road. Army service carried him to all parts of the Republic. Following the death of President Carranza, to whom he had remained loyal, the young officer passed four years in Chiapas, where, as he tells it, he didn't see even a railroad track throughout the entire period. Yet while the experience was full of hardships, he now realizes that his isolation did not go unrewarded.

Foremost, perhaps, among the compensations for his loneliness was his daily contact with the lush tropical vegetation of the region, where Nature is in her most exuberant mood. It was doubtless here that the painter developed his first feeling for rich, warm color, for the sparkling jewel-like tones that later were to characterize his use of transparent washes. Appropriately enough, it was his original instructor, Dr. Atl, who discovered the young painter's talent and who constantly encouraged him with a sincere interest in his efforts and achievements.

In the course of his numerous military and diplomatic missions, General Beteta has visited all the capitals of Europe, including the Scandinavian countries, which he regards as archetypes of ideal social organization. He

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One of the Roman series of murals by General Beteta.

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has even visited the polar regions of the Arctic Circle. But he owes his greatest aesthetic debt, he maintains, to the glamorous lands of the Near East, to French and Spanish Morocco, Egypt and other parts of Africa. In Istanbul with its brilliant pageantry—its venders balancing exotic wares on their heads, its turbaned merchants sitting cross-legged in improvised bazaars as they piously thumb the sacred Koran against backgrounds of precious rugs and tapestries—General Beteta was awakened to the color possibilities of city streets.

Through the retrospective vista opened up by distance, he became nostalgically aware that the Mexican capital, no less than the ancient Moslem town on the Golden Horn, was a veritable painter's paradise. He determined to record, with the sure, swift strokes now at his command, the myriad vivid-hued patterns that life assumes along the venerable *calles* of the Mexican capital. He became impatient to register, he relates, the charm of its age-mellowed walls and their arched doorways, the excitement of petate-roofed *mercados* bulging with their variety of natural products and colorful handicraft. He longed to capture, in glowing color with the indefinable vibrancy that only love for material produces, all the distinctive architectural moods of the Mexican scene before many of them disappear forever, to make way for the new giant forms of glass and steel in the relentless advance of mechanization.

But while General Beteta's art is ever alert to the "beauty that is in passing," it is by no means confined to romantic byways or to the faded rose tints of *tezontle* walls.

With equal decorative effect and feeling for the subject, he depicts the great skyscrapers in the capital's business section. But, curiously enough, the spectator grasps at a glance that these international style structures soar in their glittering elevations from Mexican soil, that they are profiled against a Mexican sky. Other prosaic scenes that are endowed with poetic values by General Beteta's artistry are railroad depots and puffing engines, the teeming crowds, the canvas-covered *puestos* of narrow thoroughfares and the unkempt corners of slum districts.

Obviously General Beteta's art is not a product of the so-called Mexican School, rooted in generous borrowings from the codices and from the rich and varied popular arts. Nor does it pretend to assume the social or political functions of Mexico's great Revolutionary painters. Mexico lends itself admirably to lyrical as well as to epic or symphonic interpretation. And, like the two sides of the proverbial coin, each aspect has its own validity in the integral expression of the national personality.

While General Beteta has lived and worked in France and has enjoyed close friendships with the outstanding Abstract-Expressionists there, he has not been influenced by any contemporary French school. His works are free, personal statements, executed, as one might expect, within the framework of the latest high development of the water-color medium. The transference of the magic of General Beteta's conceptions and his technical skill from the water color—which despite its small size, always registers a sense of monumentality—to the large dimensions of the painted wall is a logical, even an inevitable step.

During the relatively short period in which he has engaged in mural painting, General Beteta has produced several large-scale works that combine striking effectiveness with rare poetic nuance. His interpretative view of the ruins of the Roman Forum, a canvas measuring approximately 15½ feet in width by 7 feet in height, painted in Politec plastics in soft tonalties of sepia and gray, adorns the enclosed terrace of the Mexico City home of Sr. and Sra. Manuel Ontañon. Another mural, 9¾ feet by 5 feet, showing the ancient Roman Coliseum from a dramatic angle, has been installed in the home of his daughter, Sra. Sarita Beteta de González. A mural of equal dimensions, also in the Politec medium, was

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GENERAL BETETA painting the mural "Roman Forum."

commissioned in June, 1960 for the administrative offices of the Portreo Distillery Plant in Veracruz. The theme, interpreting one of the principal local industries, depicts the loading of sugar cane on flatcars destined for the processing plant.

In recent years the artist has visited Italy, on cultural missions, and in 1958 he was married to the Countess Enrica Spreca of Rome.

His work, shown in several one-man exhibits in the Italian capital, was received with enthusiasm by the leading critics.

We asked General Beteta what relation he felt existed between his military profession and his artistic activities. He answered in a single word—discipline! Granting, he explained, that one is born with a strong desire to paint and a sincere love of art, the spirit of perseverance and the zeal for perfection of detail inculcated by military training are of inestimable value to the artist. It is necessary for him to conquer

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obstacles on the road to mastery, and new obstacles arise daily. Discipline and the habit of putting forth one's best effort in the solution of each problem are the soundest guarantees of success in life. It is the same in art, always, provided of course—as General Beteta qualifies—that one is an artist by nature.

General Beteta has been identified with physical education in Mexico; under Presidents Lázaro Cárdenas and Manuel Avila Camacho, he held the rank of cabinet minister, as chief of the Department of Physical Education. Among his most vital experiences in the educational field, he recalls the five-year period during which he commanded a regiment of conscript soldiers at San Juan Teotihuâcán, and was given the opportunity to put into practice an educational program designed to combat illiteracy and inculcate regard for hygiene and for knowledge.

General Beteta has frequently served Mexico as a diplomat. He has been Ambassador Plenipotentiary in Chile, Colombia, Panama, Ecuador and in other countries of Latin America. During the Cardenas administration, he was a member of the General Staff.

General Beteta's artistic as well as his military career have been a source of public service. He has generously contributed to his nation's cultural development by assisting younger artists to acquire professional training. At the exhibition held last year at the Monterrey Institute of Art, his water colors, selling for 2,500 pesos each, reached a sales total of 281,000 pesos. After defraying the expenses of the exhibition, the entire proceeds were turned over to the Instituto Figueroa, through the First Lady of the Republic.

FEDERICO CANTÚ

Federico Cantú, Mexico's outstanding engraver, has been painting distinguished murals in virtual secrecy for more than a decade. Famed for his sensitive, stylized portraits, whose linear purity and technical authority critics have compared favorably with Italian Renaissance masters, Cantú has been quietly working in recent years on the walls of time-mellowed churches, convents and stately Colonial residences in the City of Palaces. Although what might be called a publicity "blackout" has obscured the artist's achievements as a muralist, he has nevertheless succeeded in transferring to areas embracing many square meters the rare personal qualities that characterize his creations in the graphic medium. Fortunately, his latest murals are available to the general public, since he has just completed decorations on the tenth floor of the Social Security building. One, on the theme of Maternity, measures 11 by 8 feet. The other, of equal dimensions, represents Quetzalcoatl dispensing his gifts to the Toltecs—among them the Promethean gift of fire.

Since 1950, Cantú, who was born in Cadereyta, Nuevo León on March 3, 1908, has been a prolific producer of fresco murals. Within the past two years he has completed five enormous panels in the residence of Lic. Benito Coquet in the Mexican capital.

In 1959 he decorated, with several frescoes, the ex-convent of San Diego. Here his themes deal with the early post-Conquest period. One panel, titled "The Informants of Sahagún," depicts the beloved Franciscan chronicler recording the interpretation of Codex pictographs by native scholars. In the mural, covering a wall space of 800 square feet, appear portraits of Sahagún, Olmos, Mendieta and other Franciscan monks who left chron-

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CANTÚ. "Orchestra of Angels," lunette, Convent of San Diego.

icles. In this same building in 1950, Cantú also painted a lunette, "Orchestra of the Angels," 8 feet high and 22 feet wide.

During the same year the artist executed a major work in the Seminario de Misionerios de Guadalupe on Calle Insurgentes in Mexico City. The subject of this impressive religious work, occupying 1,600 square feet, is Christ and God the Father. At the Seminary, Cantú has also executed a stained-glass window and Stations of the Cross. As this book goes to press, he has been commissioned to decorate two other chapels of the institution.

In 1933 Cantú decorated one of the principal patios of the Regional Museum in Morelia, Michoacán with a horizontal panel above the entrance. The work, 42 feet long and 10 feet high, titled "Los Conquistadores," portrays Spanish cavalrymen—one of them an armored skeleton—advancing on galloping steeds, with unfurled standards, over the Mexican land, leaving destruction in their wake. The following year the artist executed a smaller fresco (6½ feet by 3 feet), entitled "Madonna and Child, Surrounded by Angels." The figures are portraits of the members of the family of Lic. Raúl Noriega.

In discussing Federico Cantú, the critic Luis Cardoza y Aragon refers to him as one of the "most accomplished painters of the new generation in Mexico," adding: "Lyrical force stands out in all of his works. He has had fail-

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CANTÚ. "Christ and God the Father," fresco, Seminary of Missionaries, Guadalupe.

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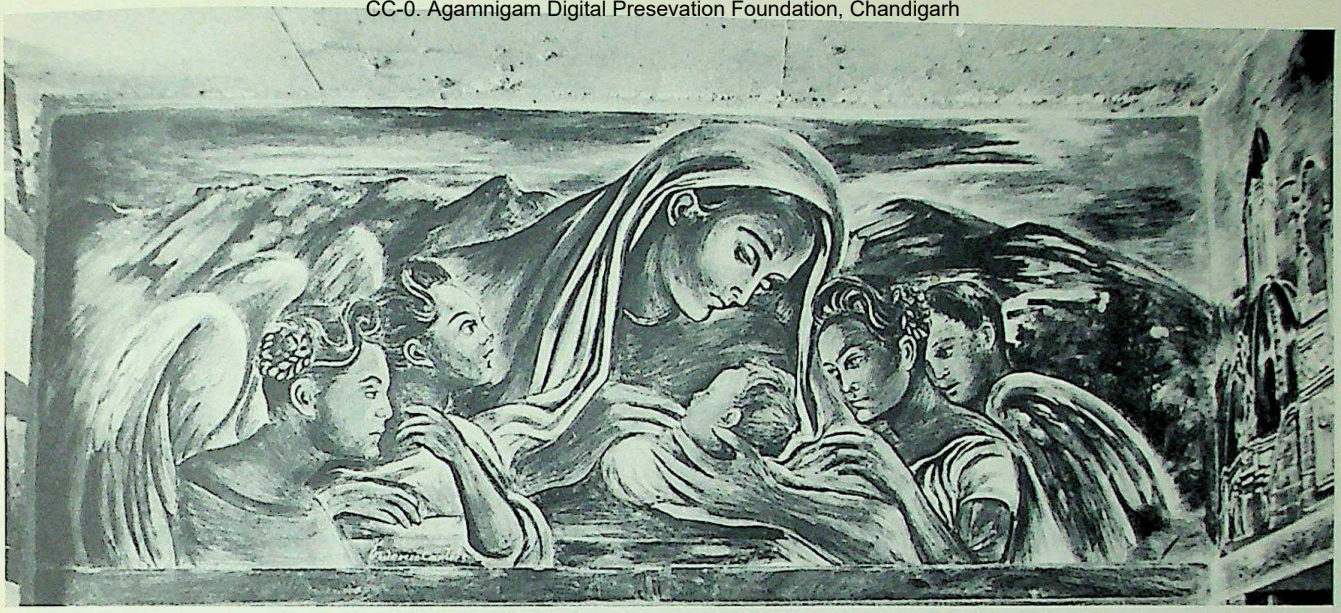

CANTÚ. "Madonna and Child with Angels," fresco.

ures, but combining all of his qualities he attains an expression of the most hidden, passionate and purest of his latent possibilities, of which there can never be a doubt. His life as a painter, we should say, his entire life, has been honorable and exemplary. He has done much as he has desired, contrary to the styles, the tendencies and requirements of a pseudo-revolutionary art which, during several years have poisoned artistic sentiments not yet secure, or probably false or pretentious. Cantú has developed his art with serious study, laudable sovereignty and great disdain both for criticism and for fame."

Following his first training in the open-air school in Coyoacán, under the direction of Alfredo Ramos Martínez, Cantú's studies included a year in Europe—mostly in France and Spain—and two years, 1926 to 1928, in the New York workshop of the sculptor José de Creeft. His first one-man show was held at the Exposition Park Museum in Los Angeles, California, where he later collaborated in the decoration of a church.

In 1930 he exhibited with a group of Mexican painters at the Delphic Studios and, later, in one sponsored by that gallery at Macy's. Cantú's third trip to Europe followed, and, upon his return to Mexico in 1932, he exhibited in the Sala de Arte of the Secretaría de Educación under the direction of the painter, Gabriel Fernández Ledesma. That same year he decorated the Papillon Bar, but, with the dismantling of the building, his murals, "Life of Harlequin," disappeared. From the sketches of this work, he later developed "The Triumph of Death," an oil of mural pro-

CANTÚ. "Maternity," fresco.

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portions that was donated by Dr. MacKinley Helm to the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

In 1937 Cantú was married to Gloria Calero, whose classic features have been his constant inspiration and of whom he has painted numerous portraits. During his second stay in New York, between 1938 and 1941, the artist's works in various media were shown in three one-man and in several group exhibits. The frescoes he painted in 1943 in the church of San Miguel Allende, Guanajuato, were destroyed or covered.

The following year he became an instructor in the Esmeralda School, under the direction of Antonio Ruiz. During this period he illustrated several books, two of them by Dr. Helm. He also executed a series of engravings, "Horses of Yemen," for the Benjamin Franklin Library.

With the exception of the mural painted for the family of Fernando Vizcayno, Cantú devoted himself for the next few years to portraiture and engraving. Among the creations of this phase was a series of line engravings on silver for the Church of La Purísima, a project in which Carlos Alvarado Lang and the silversmith G. S. Lemus collaborated.

In 1948 Cantú exhibited some of his most important portraits and engravings at the Mont-Orendain Gallery. A year later he executed, for Dr. Helm, the "Angelic Quintette" (6 by 15 feet) in tempera on wood panels.

Cantú's latest work, a series of polychromed bas-relief panels and sculptural motifs executed in collaboration with Luis Ortiz Monasterio, was completed in September, 1960 after a year of unremitting labor. The striking decorations, based on national themes such as the Eagle and the Serpent, adorn the exterior of various units of the new Unidad Independencia, in San Jeronimo, a *multifamiliar* built by the Mexican Institute of Social Security and comprising 2,500 dwellings to house 12,500 persons. Cantú is now engaged in a similar project for the Social Security building in San Luis Potosí.

The influences that have shaped Cantú's aesthetic creation have been analyzed by Cardoza y Aragon as follows:

"Everyone is influenced as he deserves to be. Federico Cantú has studied modern French painting, admirable for its passion and for its non-conformity. He knows it to be a foundation, without ever losing the road and aided always by the great Mediterranean tradition. Nineteenth-Century French, Italian Renaissance, as well as Spanish masters, among whom El Greco seems to me to hold a preponderant place, have served him in reaching creative maturity. It would be obstinate not to see this preference for French contemporaneous art as one of the qualities of his painting and as one of the currents which have influenced not only Cantú but also all modern Mexican painters in arriving at their own peculiar form of expression."

DESIDERIO ESCAMILLA

Among the younger Mexican painters few can claim a more intense personal drama than has enveloped the career of Desiderio Escamilla. Born in the turbulent "La Huaca" district of Veracruz on February 12, 1921, he has labored since childhood in order to exist —to exist that he might go on painting. No job has been too menial or too arduous to help him achieve his dominant aim. He has worked on the wharves of his native city as

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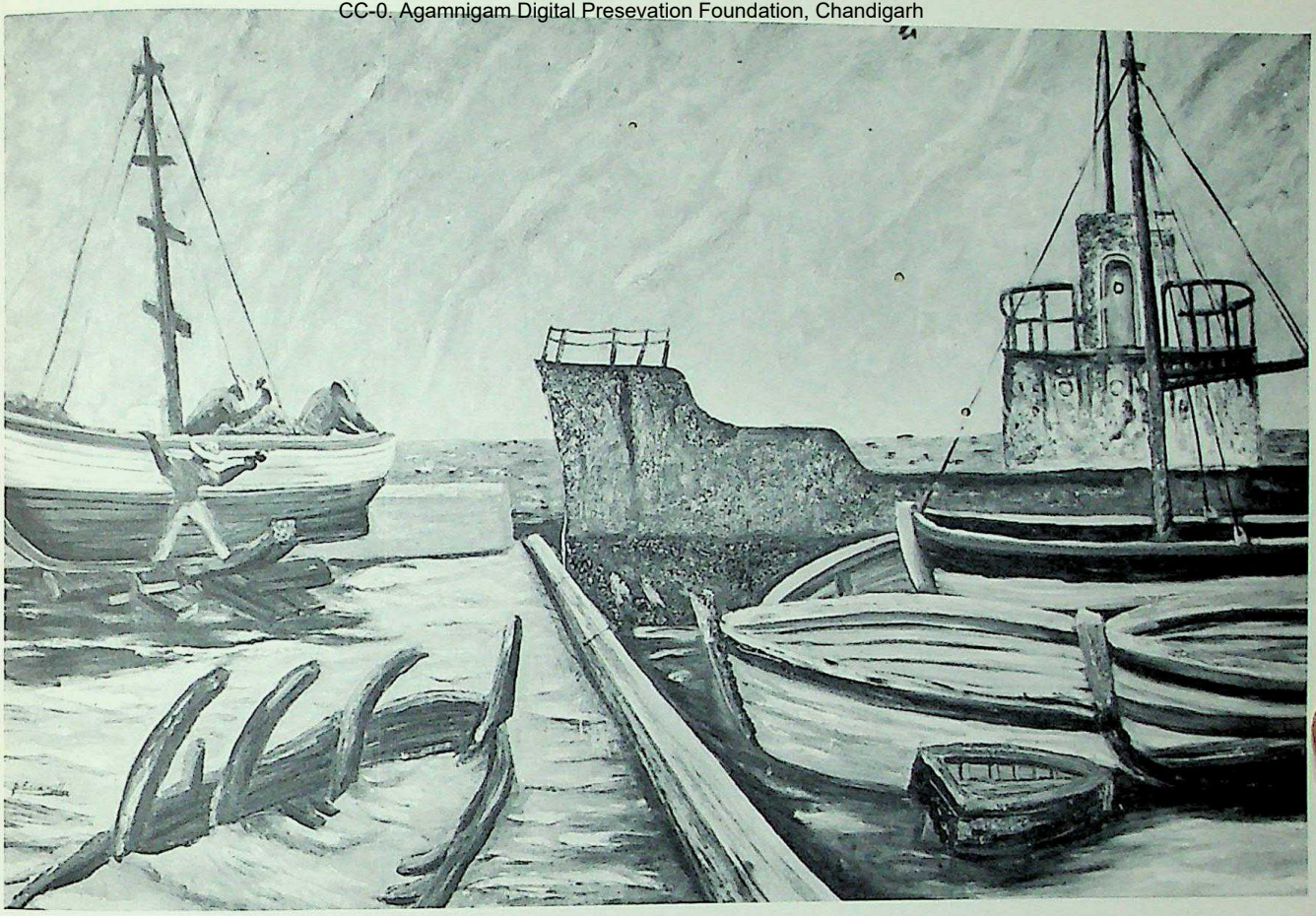

ESCAMILLA. "Fishermen," detail of mural.

a stevedore and as a custom-house porter. He has been a fisherman, a diver, a welder, a barber, a shoemaker and, in recent years, a railroad hand. With the exception of sporadic drawing lessons at night classes, in the local cultural center maintained by the Sindicato, Escamilla is entirely self-taught. The environment and daily tasks of the humble folk with whom he has lived and struggled are his constant inspiration.

In gouache and oil and synthetic materials, Escamilla is a prolific painter. His talents have not yet fully matured, but for the most part his work already shows an integrity that is born only of first-hand knowledge at the service of an overwhelming emotional urge. Clearly his single-minded purpose is to translate into an art form the image, the mood of a passing experience. In a vigorous style and with a highly personal linear trenchancy that lingers indelibly in the spectator's memory, he registers his direct outlook that curiously embraces the whole within the fragmentary. Drama emerges as inevitably and as naturally from his interpretative essays as from the rhythm of the changing seasons. Escamilla's homely scenes of men wresting their livelihood from the tumultuous sea, or snatching moments of respite from toil on glistening tropical beaches, invariably enlarged upon the world of vision. Yet they seldom fail to communicate to the spectator's awareness a clearly defined surface reality that often implies profound universal values.

Escamilla's first exhibition was held in the Tres Generaciónes Gallery in Veracruz in

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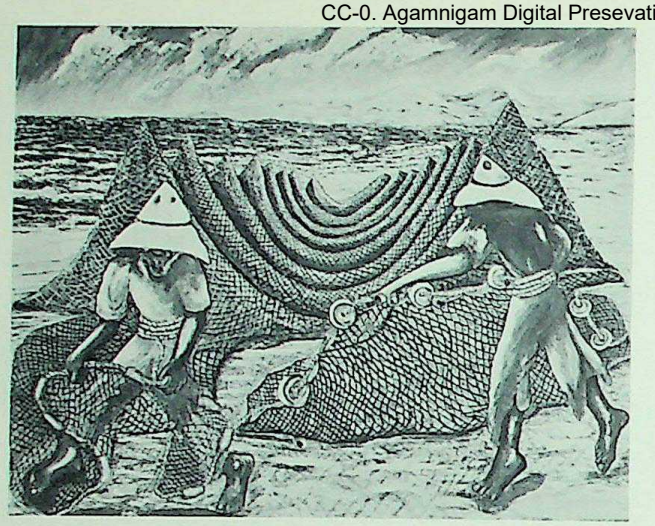

ESCAMILLA. "Fishermen Dragging in the Nets," detail of mural, "Veracruz."

1954, under the sponsorship of Srta. Elvira Gandara. At this event, in which the artist won the title of Painter of the Sea and the Sands, the townspeople first became aware of his rare talents, and ever since have regarded him with affectionate pride. An exhibition of Escamilla's works is now invariably a major civic attraction. Discussing the unexpected success of his first show, the artist has stated: "It gave me faith in myself and the courage I needed in order to continue struggling and facing the privations and humiliation that today crush the spirit of the young painter. It strengthened me against doing treason to the

ESCAMILLA and mural, "Veracruz."

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ESCAMILLA. Mural (vinylite on mesonite) commemorating "Año de la Patria" held by the Confederation of Railroad Workers at Veracruz.

vocation for which I lived and was ready to die!"

Pedro Zapata points out in his *Biographic Notes* that Escamilla's second exhibition at the Galería de Artes Plásticas in the Mexican capital in 1956, dispelled all doubt concerning the vital force of his expression and established his fame as a vigorous and authentic representative of Mexican contemporary art.

The brilliant promise of these initial events was fully realized in Escamilla's comprehensive exhibition in December, 1957 at the Galería Artes Contemporaneos, directed by Dolores Alvarez. Concerning this collection, David Alfaro Siqueiros wrote:

"Escamilla's case—an example of extreme eloquence about that which is significant for the man of the working class. He is gifted with genius, expressing himself in the order of aesthetic creation." Elsewhere Siqueiros commented: "Escamilla's is a primitive audacity. And, in our epoch of routine academism, audacity both in the world of abstractionism and in that of the figurative, is the greatest of the virtues. In any event, it is the virtue that can lead the artist and all artists to the formal solutions that the new human and social content of our age demands. Escamilla moves firmly in this direction." And again Siqueiros declares: "Escamilla is completely true to himself. He is a keen observer and, above all, a

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born painter, as is amply demonstrated in the spontaneity of his drawing."

The distinguished critic Enrique F. Gual wrote of the 1957 exhibition in *Excelsior:* "Desiderio Escamilla presents a new case of primitive self training of the greatest interest. He is a young man possessed of extraordinary expressive virility."

In April, 1960 Escamilla held his first one-man show in the United States, exhibiting forty works in different media at the Center Market Gallery of Washington, D.C., under the patronage of Alma M. Reed and Joseph Borkin. The event aroused the enthusiasm of the critics, several of whom acquired paintings for their private collections.

In the mural field, Siqueiros views Escamilla's potential—his strong aesthetic personality and his socially conscious attitude—as "the hope of contemporary Mexican art." Within the past three years the painter has seriously turned his attention to wall decoration. Several murals executed in pyroxylin, are now to be seen in the meeting halls of labor organizations and homes in Veracruz.

Among his more important works in this field is a large-scale mural commissioned by the Sindicato Unidad y Progreso, TAMSA, dedicated on May 1, 1960 as a feature of the annual Veracruz Labor Day celebration. Scenes from the life of a Gulf Coast fisherman is the theme of a series of panels that the painter has recently completed and installed in the home of Dr. Cox of Veracruz.

DESIDERIO HERNÁNDEZ XOCHITIOTZIN

The current widespread movement among state and municipal governments to record glorious events of local history on public walls constantly opens up new opportunity for painters in every part of the Mexican Republic. One of the most gifted of the young provincial muralists, selected for this task in his native Tlaxcala, is Desiderio Hernández Xochitiotzin, born in San Bernardino Contla in 1922.

His most important project in the fresco medium was begun in 1957 and will eventually cover the walls of the main patio of Tlaxcala's Government Palace. In concept and in execution, Xochitiotzin's mural work is no less distinguished than his canvases and drawings depicting pueblo fiestas—colorful and psychologically penetrating interpretations that first won him a secure place in contemporary Mexican art. The Tlaxcala frescoes dramatize heroic episodes in pre-Columbian legend and history, which, except to scholars, are little known outside the oral tradition of the region. The artist's rhythmic handling of mass movement is strikingly seen in the panel titled "Reception of the Teochichimecas Tlaxcaltecas by the Texcocomes," in which long lines of these ancient peoples advance and meet against a background of mountains that tower above a majestic pyramid temple. Another panel portrays the Festival of Tlaxcala's tutelar deity, Camaxtli. The brilliant ritual evokes a mood of religious reverence. On an adjoining wall Texcoco's great poet king, Netzahualcoyotl, is shown before the armies of the Tlaxcalans and Huexotzingans at Calpulapán. A stated aim of the Syndicate of Revolutionary Painters and Sculptors, proclaimed in the 1920's, was to instruct the masses. As a "third generation" muralist, Xochitiotzin accepts the public responsibility.

Xochitiotzin was born into a family of Tlaxcallan artisans. He began his studies in the José María Lafragua School, in the city

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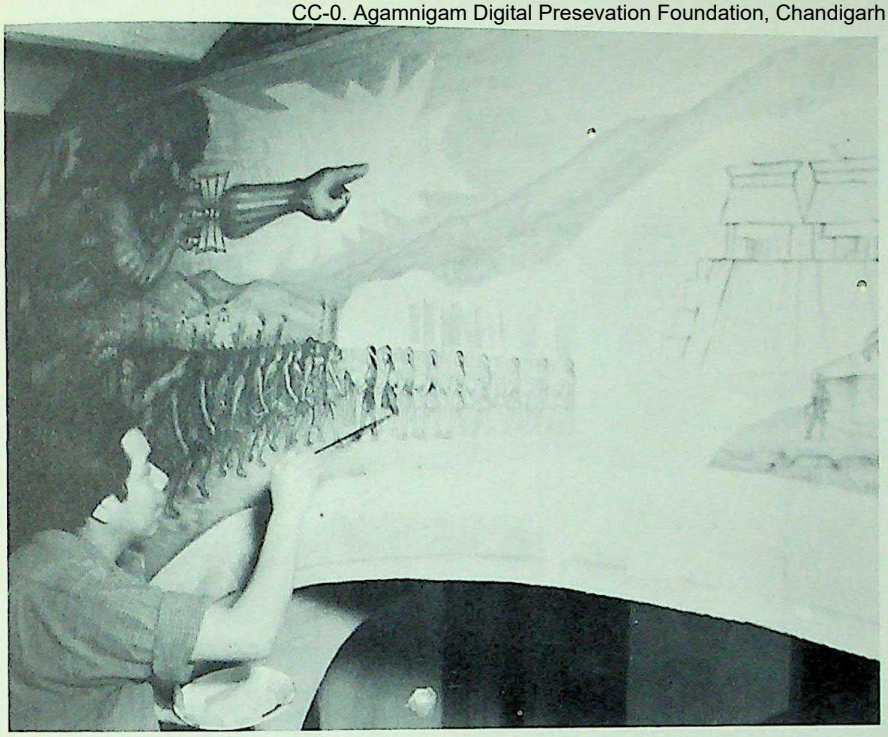
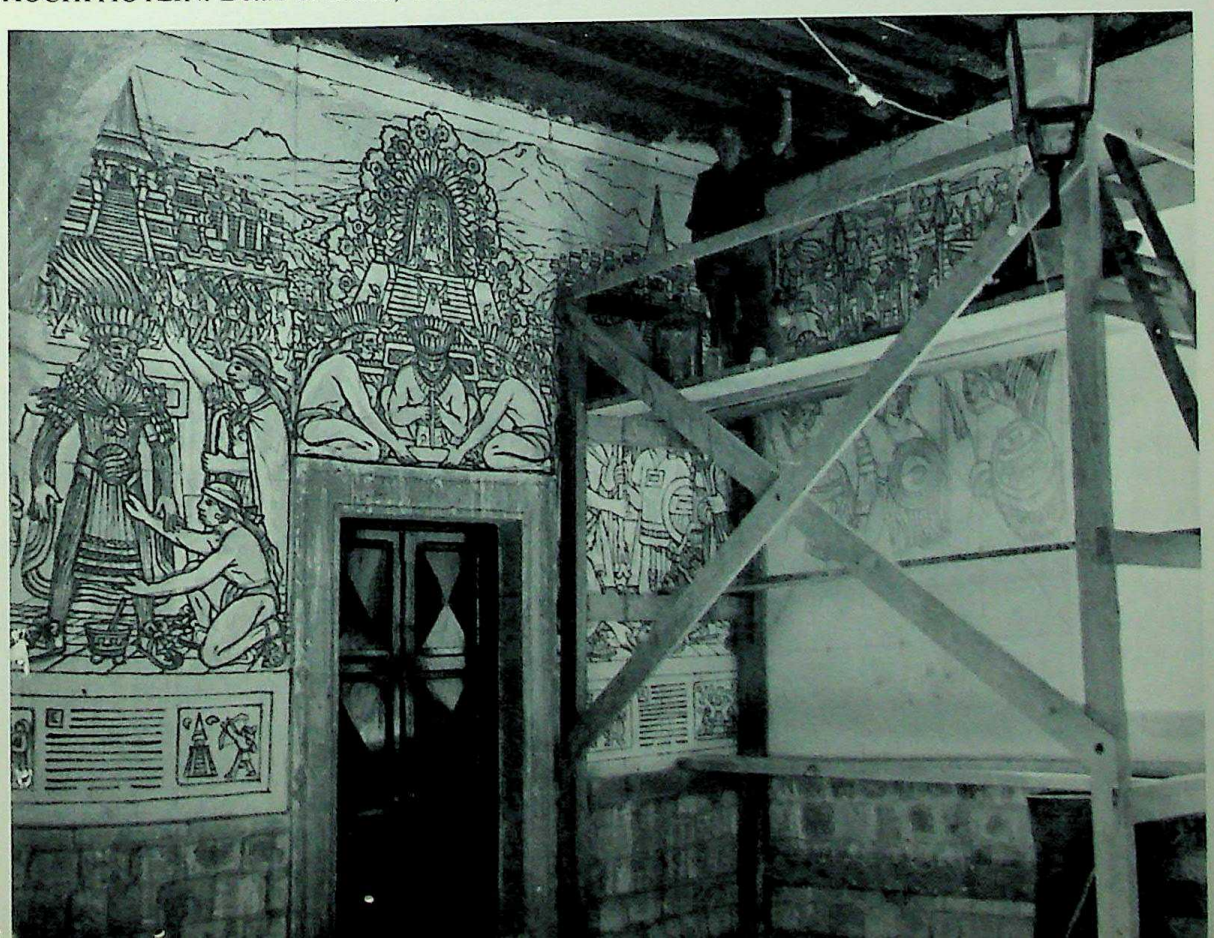


XOCHITIOTZIN. Detail of mural, Governor's Palace, Tlaxcala.

XOCHITIOTZIN. Detail of fresco, Governor's Palace, Tlaxcala.



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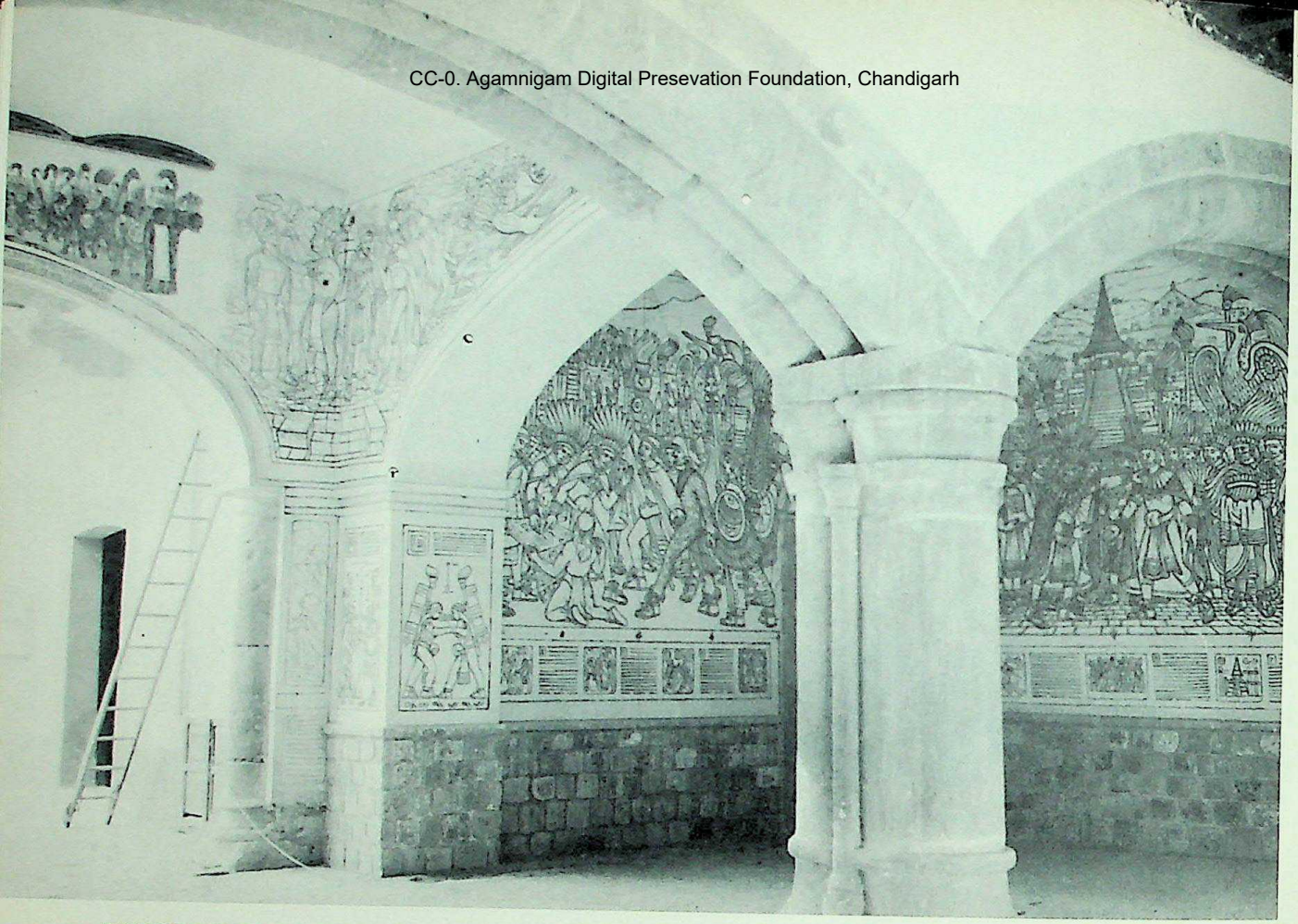

XOCHITIOTZIN. Detail of mural, Governor's Palace, Tlaxcala.

of Puebla, continuing with drawing and painting in the Puebla Academy of Fine Arts from 1936 to 1940. In 1941, he was one of the founders of the Union of Plastic Arts, working in his father's craft shop, the Taller de Holateria Artistica, while pursuing his art studies.

In 1947 he left the Taller, which specialized in ornamental tinware, to devote himself entirely to art. He had already participated in fifteen group exhibitions, which the Union had held in Puebla, and in two held in Mexico City under Union auspices in 1943 and 1947. In addition he was represented at three "20 de Noviembre" exhibitions and, in 1947, at the National Exhibit, with a group known as the "Twelve Young Painters." In December of the same year his works were shown at the University of Michoacán in Morelia, and at the "Christmas Exhibition" in the Mont-Orendain Gallery. At another *navidad* event held in Toluca, thirty of his drawings on religious themes attracted favorable comment, as did his forty-five drawings shown in the first exhibition of active Union members in the Salon of Agustín Arrieta, in Puebla.

His first one-man show in the Mexican capital, which opened at the Galería Arte Moderno in September, 1949, received warm critical tributes.

Antonio Rodriguez, of *El Nacional,* wrote in his column "Art in Mexico": "No one has equaled the force and subtlety with which this humble yet extraordinarily self-confident young man has captured the happy boisterousness of the Fiesta. No one has more dynamically imprisoned on paper the convulsive movement of their mock battles, which the people

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knowing well their traditions, copy from the real ones. And no one, more engagingly than Xochitiotzin suggests the special rhythms of the native dances."

Luis Lara Pardo, in *Review of Reviews,* has written: "The whole is a unity of surprising variety. All the mental manifestations of the natives are explained. One would say that the artist finds in the carnival explosion of the village the parallel of individual sensations, all is motivated by irony, satire; life and death, riches and poverty, sorrows and happiness. The artist has looked for genuine Mexican inspiration. I believe he has studied with profound attention, the great Guadalupe Posada, master of masters, the first who knew how to interpret the most intimate spiritual manifestations of the Mexican people—tragedy, comedy, vernacular, intimate life, thoughts hidden most of the time but which may emerge vociferously on special occasions. If Posada were alive, he would embrace Xochitiotzin who, in some ways, has surpassed him, having been inspired not by the sensational passing event, not by the local gossip, but by attitudes and modes of group expression found in the pueblos of certain regions of Mexico."

In *Novedades,* the veteran critic Ceferino Palencia praised the "consistent merit of Xochitiotzin's brush and ink drawings in which the dynamic abandon is represented with singular grace and faithful expressiveness."

CARLOS OROZCO ROMERO

Admirers of Carlos Orozco Romero frequently express regret that his magnificent Mexican landscapes have not been transferred to the walls of public buildings. For, whether in their inspirational vastness of scenic sweep or in their semiabstract objectivity—in either case a poetic statement—they indicate the painter's mural qualities of a high order. As a matter of fact, Orozco Romero was well started on a muralist's career as early as 1923 when, with Siqueiros and de la Cueva, he decorated the Public Library of Guadalajara, where he was born in 1898.

His first professional work was in the field of caricature. With other young *tapatíos* who have since achieved fame, he was a member of a group organized by José Guadalupe Zuno, former governor and present director of the State Museum, an energetic and consistent promotor of Jalisco's local talent.

In 1921 Orozco Romero exhibited his works in Europe and remained there in travel

OROZCO ROMERO. "Shadows," oil.

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OROZCO ROMERO. "Los Fusilados," (women weeping for the slain during the Revolution), oil.

and study until 1925. Between 1935 and 1938 he directed the publication of the monthly bulletin, *Carta Blanca,* in which he reproduced in color the paintings of contemporary Mexican masters.

In numerous canvases and water colors he has portrayed the grandeur of the Mexican scene and a variety of Mexican pueblo types with charm and integrity. As a portraitist, his interpretations are distinguished by sensitive character penetration, lyrical color and decorative line. His entire production is highly expressive of a well-defined personal style and an original vision of his time and place.

He was recently appointed director of Mexico's Modern Art Museum.

GUILLERMO SANCHEZ LEMUS

Master Restorer of Frescoes

A six-year labor which has averted an aesthetic catastrophe has just been completed in Mexico. Begun in September, 1954, through the joint action of the Instituto Nacionál de

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Bellas Artes and the Jalisco State Government, under the direction of Professor Guillermo Sanchez Lemus, the restoration of the world-famed frescoes of José Clemente Orozco in the Hospicio Cabañas of Guadalajara, is now an accomplished fact.

For some months before the start of the restoration project, the Mexican muralist's masterpiece was in danger of collapse. Structural weaknesses developed in the chapel of the huge stone building which had been designed in the late eighteenth century by the Spanish architect-sculptor, Manuel Tolsa, as a home for Jalisco's orphans and aged poor. The double row of slender Doric columns supporting the great lanterned dome shifted position, causing cracks, loose sections, and gaps in the surface of the fresco's walls. Throngs of art lovers who visit Guadalajara have been disappointed during recent years to find the cupola concealed by boards, placed across the entire circular space as a precautionary measure. Orozco's celebrated "Man of Fire," which dominates the chapel, was no longer visible.

But today the inspired painting emerges from its wooden covering as gloriously radiant in its consuming flames as it was on that day in 1939 when Orozco's brush impressed the final stroke. The long, costly process of repairing the chapel building and its unrivaled frescoes began as a fitting tribute to the muralist's memory on the fifth anniversary of his death.

But no amount of money provided by the art-conscious federal and state governments could have saved what Dr. Justino Fernandez acclaims as "one of the greatest works of art history and the most impressive to be found in America," if the skill of Professor Sanchez Lemus had not been available. As a creative artist and a skilled craftsman who has had exceptional training and experience in fresco repair, Professor Sanchez Lemus was admirably equipped for his assignment. No less important was his profound sense of moral obligation to preserve Orozco's masterpiece. The technical details of his work, in fact, are inextricably involved with the spiritual impulse that he brings to it.

Professor Sanchez Lemus began his studies in painting and engraving at the School of Plastic Arts of the National University of Mexico. In 1947 he was granted a scholarship for specialized study at the Central Institute of Restorations in Rome. After five years in this venerable center of fresco repair, he studied in the world's leading museums, working in the National Gallery in London, the Laboratory of Scientific Methods of the Louvre, the Academie Bilden den Kunst in Vienna, the Egyptian Museum in Cairo, and the Prado in Madrid. During his final years at the Institute in Rome he was commissioned to restore the Etruscan tombs at La Bighe and at El Triclinio. He had assisted during the previous year in the restoration of the Palatine Chapel of the Royal Palace at Palermo, Sicily. His original paintings were shown in June, 1952 at the International Art Circle of Rome and, later the same year, at the International Exposition of Religious Art.

Upon his return to Mexico in 1953, Professor Sanchez Lemus undertook the repair of the Orozco fresco panel "Omniscencia" in the famous House of Tiles. This beautiful mural was damaged as a result of the blasting for the foundation of the forty-story skyscraper directly opposite the Sanborn's establishment.

In discussing the discharge of what he calls "a clear patriotic duty and a sacred responsibility to history," the enthusiastic young master divides his work on the "Sistine of the Americas" into several stages. The preliminary step was the exploration of the pictorial surface through a sensitive process of finger percussion to ascertain what areas were cracked or affected by moisture. The actual repair work began with the injection of *caseato* of calcium in the crevices and loose sections. This was followed by the washing of the zones showing nitrous growths and the removal of insects and other uncleanliness from the painted surface. The pictorial re-integration was accomplished through modern techniques used internationally for the

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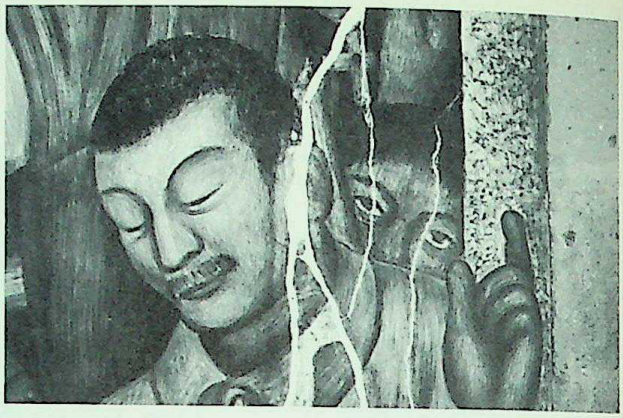
color re-integration of ancient paintings.

The consolidation of the cupola itself, requiring six months, was executed according to studies made by Architect Ignacio Díaz Morales, and carried out by Ing. José Luis de la Mora. This work included the placing of a concrete ring around the dome, the resetting of the columnar supports, and a thorough drying of the areas into which water had seeped.

The damp climate of Mexico and especially of Guadalajara, Professor Sanchez Lemus points out, hasten fresco deterioration. "Unlike those painted in the dry climate of Egypt," he explains, "Mexican frescoes suffer from rapidly changing temperatures and from heavy rains. The process of expanding and contracting due to these atmospheric changes and pressures, goes on constantly. The heavy rains also bring the fungus which whitens the painted surface. This destructive element must be fought unceasingly. Chemical analysis of the Hospicio Cabañas shows the presence of twenty-two different families of fungus in the cupola alone."

With the assistance of a small group of students—their number has grown to fifteen—and his brother, Mario, who directs the scientific investigations, Sanchez Lemus has restored since 1954 not only the Hospicio Cabañas murals, but several other works by Orozco, notably those of the National Preparatory School and the "Hidalgo" frescoes above the stairway of the Palace of Government in Guadalajara. Within the same period he has also restored Orozco's frescoes in the choir loft of the chapel of the Jesús Nazareno Hospital, the panels of the vestibule of the Normal School for Teachers, and the badly damaged frescoes in the Library at Jiquilpan. Recently Sanchez Lemus restored the Rivera frescoes in the National Palace, the Ministry of Public Education, and the Chapel of the National Agricultural School at Chapingo.

Yet, all this achievement, representing a restored area of 8,125 square feet, only serves to dramatize the real problem of Mexican muralism—the permanent maintenance of the nation's enormous aesthetic treasure of the pre-Hispanic, Colonial and Modern eras. The master restorer calls our attention to the fact that some 50,000 paintings are now housed in the fifty surviving Colonial-period convents. Many of these religious buildings are sixteenth-century monuments originally adorned with frescoes now hidden beneath coatings of lime or paint. In only five of the venerable structures at Acolman, Tepotzotlan, Actopan, Churubusco and Huejotzingo have the wall surfaces been cleaned, and, in each case, murals of beauty and of historic significance have come to light. In the archaeological zones, especially at Bonampak and Teotihuacán, the finest frescoes known to antiquity have already been discovered. But as explorations progress—there are more than 11,000 sites marked for future research by the Institute of Anthropology and History—other murals of equal or even greater importance will doubtless be found.



RIVERA. Fresco, detail, "The Teacher," Ministry of Public Education, before restoration.

What is urgently needed—if Mexico's priceless art treasures are to be salvaged or saved from destruction—is a school endowed by some foundation or international agency, where students from many countries might study the various restoration techniques. After completing their studies under Professor Sanchez Lemus or teachers he has trained, the students could apply the experience gained on Mexican walls to the enrichment of their native cultures. For Mexican muralism is the heritage of all Humanity.

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A CHECKLIST OF PAINTERS IDENTIFIED WITH MODERN MEXICAN ART

A list of those who have contributed to the inception, development and flowering of the Mexican national pictorial art has recently been compiled by Arq. Carlos Obregón Santacilia, Dr. Justino Fernández and Raúl Flores Guerrero. The list, with some additions of our own, embraces not only the pre-Revolutionary masters who broke with the Academy, the great muralists of the Renaissance and the innovators of the second and third generation, but also artists of talent who have adopted Mexican nationality or who produce and live in Mexico, even some of temporary residence.

Any complete roll call would require several pages, but the following painters, for their major or minor contributions, are included.

Aceves Navarro, Martha Adams, Ignacio Aguirre, Ramón Alva de la Canal, Ramón Alva Guadarrama, Juan Manuel Anaya, Abraham Angel, Raúl Anguiano, Luis Arenal, Emilio Amero, Salas Anzures, Michael Baxte, Argüelles Bringas, Rolando Arjona, Dr. Atl, Bardasano, Bartolí, Feliciano Béjar, Arnold Belkin, Angelina Beloff, Adolfo Best-Maugard, Ignacio Beteta, Celia Calderón, Cantú, Gonzalo Carrasco, Eleonora Carrington, Castellanos, Fernando Castro Pacheco, Eduardo Cataño, Whit Carter, Clausell, Climent, Benjamín Coria, Pedro Coronel, Rafael Coronel, Olga Costa, Miguel Covarrubias, Luis Lola Cueto, Roberto Cueva del Río, José Luis Cuevas, Jean Charlot, Gilberto Chávez, José Chávez Morado, Jorge Dubon, Francisco Díaz de León, Roberto Donis, Francisco Dosamantes, Echeverría, Francisco Eppens, Arturo Estrada, Leopoldo Estrada, Roberto Fernández Balbuena, Gabriel Fernández Ledesma, Fernando Gamboa, Grace and Marion Greenwood, José García Narezo, Garduño, Roberto Garibay, Elvira Gascón, Gedovius, Gunther Gerzo, Gironella, Francisco Goitia, Jorge González Camarena, Manuel González Galván, Xavier Guerrero, Jesús Guerrero Galván, Francisco Gutiérrez, Bulmaro Guzmán, Desiderio Hernández Xochitiotzin, Saturnino Herrán, Eduardo Luis Jurado, Mateo Herrera, Ernesto Icaza, Francisco Icaza, Leandro Izaguirre, María Izaguirre, María Izquierdo, Frida Kahlo, Xávier Lavalle, Agustín Lazo, Fernando Leal, Luis Lopez Loza, Rosa Lie Johansson, Amador Lugo, Ricardo Martínez de Hoyos, Marcia Marx Bennett, Pedro Medina, Carlos Mérida, Guillermo Meza, Alfonso Michel, Gabriel Maroto, Pepè Romero, Andrés Salgo, Roberto Montenegro, Montoya, Nicolas Moreno, Luis Macias, Enrique Morales Guerra, Rudolfo Nieto, Nefero, Nishizawa, Crawford O'Gorman, Juan O'Gorman, Pablo O'Higgins, Orozco Rivera, Orozco Romero, José Clemente Orozco, Trinidad Osorio, Máximo Pacheco, Ceferino Palencia, Paredes, Antonio Peláez, Feliciano Peña, Liliana Porter, Miguel Prieto, Antonio Pujol, Fanny Rabel, Alice Rahón, Alfredo Ramos Martínez, Joseph Raskob, Aurora Reyes, Reyes Ferreira, Reyes Meza, Fermín Revueltas, Diego Rivera, Manuel Rodríguez Lozano, Rodríguez Luna, Francisco Romano, Ignácio Rosas, Julio Ruelas, Antonio Ruiz, Luis Sahagún, Rene del Salvador Cervantes, Matías Santoya, Mateo Saldaña, Carlos Sánchez, Antonio Seguí, David Alfaro Siqueiros, Waldemar Sjolander, Juan Soriano, Arturo Souto, Valetta Swan, Rufino Tamayo, Lucinda Urrusti, Cordelia Urueta, Leonardo Vadillo, Remedios Varo, Isabel Villaseñor, Vlady, Hamilton Wolfe, Héctor Xavier, Alfredo Zalce, Angel Zárraga, Crespo de la Serna, Francisco Cornejo and Philip Stein.

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ALMA M. REED is the recognized authority on Orozco and the Mexican artists not only in the United States, but also in Mexico. She is now a feature writer, chiefly on art and archaeological subjects, for *The Sunday News of Mexico City*. Miss Reed was a feature writer on the *San Francisco Call-Bulletin* and has contributed articles to such magazines as *Creative Art, Art and Archaeology* and *The New York Times Magazine*. She is the author of *Dedication* (a translation from the Greek of Angelo Sikelianos), *Cumae* (a translation from the Italian of Consoli), and *José Clemente Orozco* (the first book on Orozco in any language, published in 1932). Her latest works include a biography of Orozco (Spanish edition in 1955, English edition in 1956). Miss Reed was also the founder and director of Delphic Studios (1929-40) which presented Mexican art and published books on Latin-American art.